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# MY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SEPOY REVOLT

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COLONEL AND MRS. DUNBAR DOUGLAS MUTER

*Frontispiece*

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# MY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SEPOY REVOLT

## (1857–58)

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BY

MRS. MUTER

WITH SEVENTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS AND A PLAN OF MEERUT CANTONMENT AT THE TIME OF THE MUTINY

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TO

MY BELOVED HUSBAND

DUNBAR DOUGLAS MUTER

COLONEL

Who entered into rest October 7th, 1909

THESE PAGES ARE DEDICATED

BY HIS DEVOTED WIFE AND COMPANION

FOR 55 YEARS

THROUGH AN EVENTFUL AND

VERY UNUSUAL CAREER

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# PREFACE

THE approaching Pageant—the proposed Coronation Durbar at Delhi—which promises to be an historical event in the annals of Great Britain and of India, affords a fitting occasion on which to recall and to contrast the picture presented on that site in 1857 and in 1911.

*Then*, the struggle for Empire fell to the lot of a few brave and resolute spirits nerved by duty to "fight to the finish," or to die, in face of overwhelming difficulties of climate, and of opposing numbers in a strongly fortified walled city.

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*Now*, our King and Queen will hold High Court on the battlefield rendered sacred by the sacrifices made by the "Delhi Field Force," surrounded by a brilliant retinue of native and loyal Princes of high rank.

11, Park Street,
Windsor

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# Part I

# OUTBREAK AT MEERUT—TO FALL OF DELHI

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# MY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SEPOY REVOLT

## Part I.

### CHAPTER I.

On Sunday, May 10th, 1857, I was at Meerut. The 1st Battalion 60th King's Royal Rifles, in which my husband was then a captain, occupied the Infantry barracks. The men were parading for church at about 6.30 p.m. My husband had left me to accompany them. The sun was sinking in a blaze of fiery heat that rose hazy and glowing from the baked plain. I drove to the church and waited outside the door, expecting every moment to hear the sound of a gay march which so strangely heralds the approach of a body of soldiers to divine worship; but—I listened in vain. A dull sound, very different from that I expected, came over the stillness of Nature around; but I little heeded the holiday-making



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in the bazaars, holiday-making, as I then thought it, though it was the commencement of a saturnalia destined to take a place in history and to revolutionize the great Empire we had founded in the East.

A gentleman accosted me. "You need not be alarmed, but an outbreak has taken place requiring the presence of the troops, so there will not be a service in the church this evening." "A slight disturbance would not stop the service," I replied; "therefore I will wait a little." But when the clock struck seven, the hour to commence, and no congregation was assembling, I called to my friend and requested him to tell my husband, should he arrive, that he had advised me to return home. Up to this, I was seated with my back to the cantonment in a little pony carriage, but the moment the horses' heads were turned I saw the Native lines in a blaze, and, in some alarm, but not in the least understanding the gravity of the position, I gave the order to hasten home.

The sun had set and was quickly followed by the dusk which leaves so little space in this region

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between the glare of day and the darkness of night. I faced in the direction of the Native lines, and now in terror and amazement beheld the horizon on fire as if the whole cantonment were in flames. Entering the broad road that leads to the bazaar I saw it was crowded with men.

Two of the European Artillery were hurrying up, pursued by a throng of natives hurling every missile they could get at the wounded and unarmed Englishmen. So intent were they on this occupation that I was allowed to pass uninjured into a road leading to my house. Our servants were assembled at the gatè in a flutter of alarm, the Khansamah (answering to a house steward) at their head. He declared he could no longer be responsible for any property, and bringing the silver in use, he returned it to my charge. At the same time he advised me to conceal myself —a proposal he saw I regarded as an insult. To conceal myself in my own house, in the lines of a regiment that had reckoned up a century of renown! And from what? That was the question. Was the Native army in revolt? Had the



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threatened storm come so soon, and was the instrument so carefully sharpened by our Government at its own throat?

The distant roar now rolled up a babel of voices, nearly drowning the ceaseless rattle of musketry, and above all came the heavy tramp of an English battalion on the march, which can be distinguished at once from the movement of any other body by one accustomed to the sound.

The interview with my servants was interrupted by a sergeant sent by my husband with directions for me to proceed to the Quarter Guard. He told me the Native force had broken into revolt, that they were shooting down every European they met, and that the English troops were moving on the bazaars. With drawn swords (already armed) the Chokedhar (our night-watchman) and the Khansamah escorted me, one on either side, to the place indicated, where I found many fugitives already assembled. Beyond the outer approach my escort declined to proceed, saying the soldiers would kill them. "Not," I replied, "if you are doing no harm. But, Khansamah, I hold you personally responsible for

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everything in my house." He made me a grand salaam, and on his return to our bungalow, though in ordinary times scrupulously honest, he forced open some cases recently soldered, preparatory to our intended departure for the Hills, believing that neither Colonel Muter nor I would ever return alive to the house, and proceeded to make a selection from the contents.

The scene at the Quarter Guard was not calculated to strengthen my fortitude. Fearful rumours were rapidly circulated, and as rapidly followed by others still more dreadful, a favourite being that the silver ornaments on the belt of the officers of the 60th formed an excellent mark, and that as soon as the officers had been killed the battalion would become disorganised and helpless. With such talk around me, I was glad to escape to a room close by, kindly offered to me by the wife of a pay-sergeant.

Every moment added to the noise, and through the roar of countless voices came the boom of heavy guns: one, two, three—then silence, and these dread messengers of good and evil tidings ceased for that night.

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In the midst of the confusion a stranger presented himself with his family, directed by my husband to join me. His house situated in the bazaar had, with all its contents, been burnt to the ground, and the family had narrowly escaped. The servants had concealed them under boughs of trees in the garden, whence they witnessed the destruction of their property, and heard the savage demand made by the armed ruffians for the discovery of their retreat. When hope had almost vanished, the place had been cleared by a party of the Rifles, and they had been sent under escort to our house, whence they were directed to the Quarter Guard. Before midnight the troops reached the Mall, where they bivouacked, throwing a chain of sentries around the European lines; and as I could then do so in safety, I returned to my house, accompanied by the fugitives. All that night I walked on the verandah, watching the flames as they sprang up from the burning houses. I could see in the new fires the progress of the incendiaries, who sometimes approached, as I thought, perilously near our lines. The weary night ended, the last flames

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died out ere the rising sun reddened the sky; and I retired to rest, with the impression of an event stamped on my mind no time can erase.

The sun rose on a scene changed in a manner words cannot describe. It was not only that it had sunk on a peaceful parade for church and rose on blackened ruins and murdered Christians; it had also sunk on good and kindly feelings, and now rose on the wildest storm of man's passions. It was mid-day turned to black night —a picture of peace changed by magic to one of war. We felt intuitively that it was a great revolution—a cyclone that had merely its centre at Meerut, destined to sweep with a violence that would startle the world, over the length and breadth of the land. Perhaps the framework of English rule would go down before the tempest, and, if so, what fate was reserved for us?

The Rifles on that Sunday evening had assembled on the parade ground. The men were standing in groups, ready to "fall in" on the sound of the bugle, and the officers were scattered in little knots, when suddenly a stream

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of soldiers poured tumultuously towards their barrack-rooms.

"What is the matter?" was the general exclamation.

"The Sepoys are in mutiny," was the answer.

Without orders, the parade was changed. The men had been waiting, without arms, for divine service — they now came forth armed and accoutred for action. Colonel Muter, then a junior Captain in the battalion, in the absence of senior officers, instantly despatched the company of Riflemen first ready and equipped, to the bazaar, to secure the Treasury and the records — who, coming up "at the double," arrived just as the Native guard, twice their strength, had turned out irresolute. This Lieutenant Austin, my husband's subaltern, settled for them, ordering them to "ground arms," and all that night the Kutchery was surrounded by a howling mob who found the Treasury, containing some lakhs of rupees, beyond their reach, while incendiarism was checked in that quarter. By this timely action not only the Meerut Canton-

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ment, but the whole Meerut district, enjoyed regular pay during this distracted period, and many ladies called on me on our return to Meerut, after the winter spent in Delhi, to express their thanks to my husband for the comfort his prompt action had secured for them. The value of the treasure thus saved may in some measure be imagined when the size of the district is considered; also the strength of the garrison at Meerut, which consisted of 1st Battalion 60th King's Royal Rifles, 6th Dragoon Guards and Bengal Artillery—all Europeans, and three Native regiments, two infantry and one cavalry. In many works on this Mutiny surprise is expressed that in Meerut alone the usual course was departed from, and the Treasury escaped the invariable spoliation, unaware that its rescue from attack was due to my husband.* In Kaye's excellent 'History of the Sepoy War' (Vol. II., page 630) the remark occurs :—" Always the same

* In the Preface to his 'History of the Indian Mutiny,' Fifth Edition, published Dec. 6th, 1903, Mr. T. Rice Holmes, courteously gives credit to Colonel Muter for having, by his prompt action, saved the Treasury at Meerut at the time of the outbreak.

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experience, the mutineers made for the gaol, released the prisoners, *plundered the Treasury*, destroyed the Kutchery with all its Records, and gutted houses of the Christian inhabitants." At Allahabad £170,000 in silver was taken. At Cawnpore on the night of 4th June the 2nd Native Cavalry proceeded to the commissariat cattle-yards, took thirty-six elephants, the property of the Government, and went direct to the Treasury, some seven miles distant; and there, assisted by the Mahratta troops of the Nana Sahib, they plundered and carried off about eight and a half lakhs of rupees, which they packed on the elephants and in carts. All this was unknown as the programme of the mutineers at the time Colonel Muter took the first step in one of England's most memorable struggles.

Meanwhile, the convalescent, the excused, those going on pass—all rushed into the ranks; and the Colonel who attended to march the men to church found the soldiers in column of *route* ready to engage an enemy. Thus the first move made in one of England's most momentous wars was by the private soldiers, who seemed to have

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a keen appreciation of the crisis and of the work before them.

All the guards, save those over the quarters of the European forces, were given by the Native Infantry. Even in the lines of European regiments, Native sentries mounted over the Quartermaster's stores. When the ammunition was sent for, the Native guard was seen sneaking away. So rapidly had the 60th got under arms that they could with ease have captured all the Natives on duty in their lines, but neither the officers nor the men had a notion of the length to which the Mutiny had proceeded, and they waited impatiently for orders to act.

In the meantime the surprise was so complete that the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Greathed, became aware of his danger only when men were yelling in tens of thousands around his house, and he was roused from his security to trust his own life and that of his wife into the hands of his servants, who safely carried them through that night of danger. The General escaped by a back way, and the Brigadier rode at full speed from his home with the bullets of his own guard

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whistling past his head. Probably this officer—Sir Archdale Wilson—whose good fortune it was to strike the final blow at Delhi, never more nearly met his fate. While the chiefs were concealing themselves or riding for their lives, the bazaars were in the hands of myriads of Goojurs* and badmashes† who had assembled from the surrounding country to assist in the extermination of the English and to sack the cantonment. The Brigadier rode up and the battalion moved at once on the bazaar. It was joined by a battery of artillery and some troops of cavalry. Fearing to entangle this small force among the dense masses that filled the streets and a Native force stronger than his own, the General passed to the right and formed on the parade ground in front of the Native lines.

The sun had set and the moon had not yet lit up the scene. The illumination before him rising out of the thick blackness around was one of awful grandeur. For more than a mile three rows of thatched bungalows were on fire, and

* A plundering gipsy tribe.

† Rogues and vagabonds in the city.

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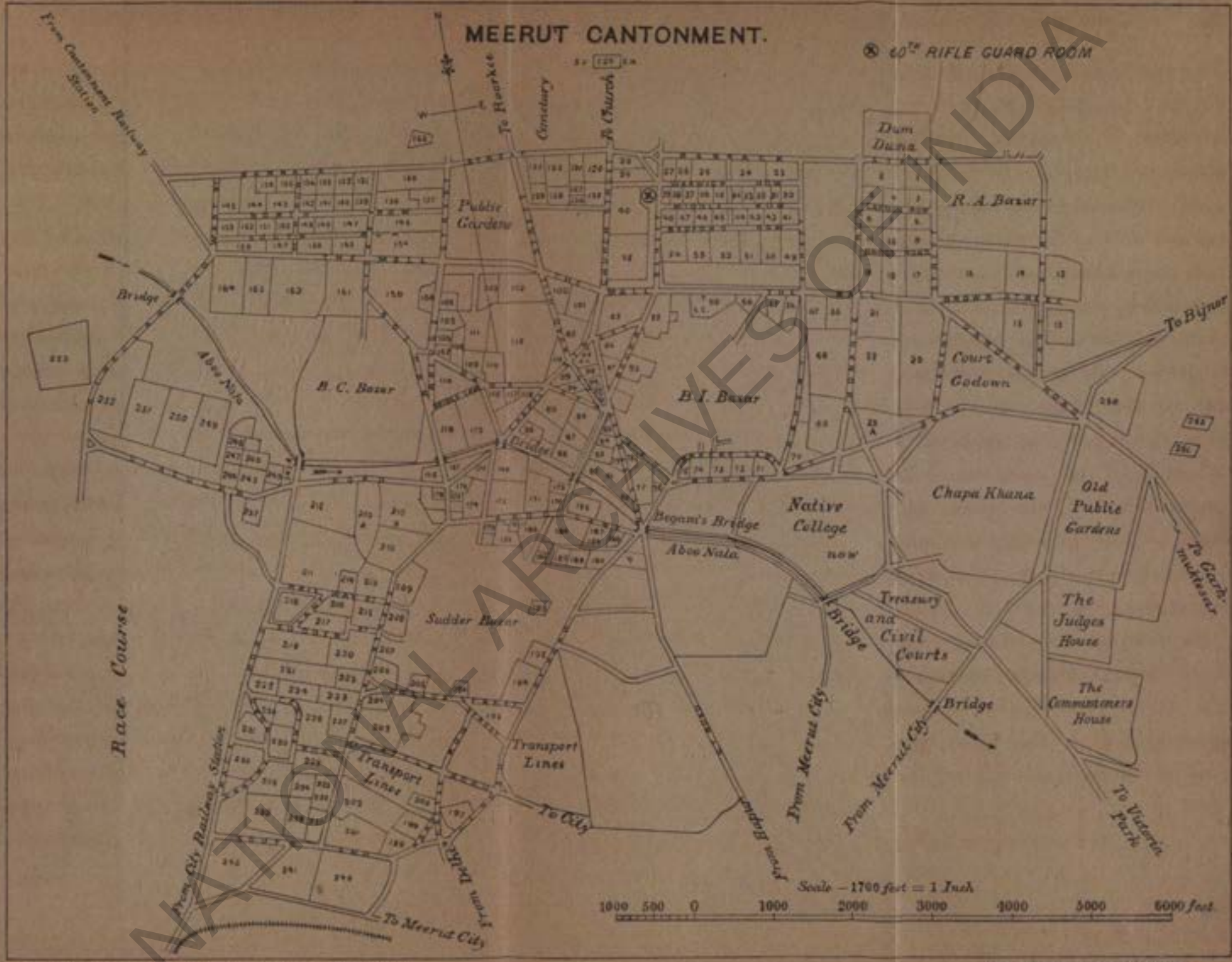


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the spaces between seemed filled with a legion of fiends. As the skirmishers drew close, mounted Sowars with drawn sabres were seen riding furiously about in the light of the conflagration; but the troops approached in darkness, and it was not till the Enfield bullet in its deadly flight passed close by, that the mutineers knew their danger. Drawing rapidly to their left, the loud hum told the Brigadier they were congregating on his right. Some guns were unlimbered and the multitude was dispersed with three rounds of grape. This was the last ever seen of the Native army of Bengal in the lines of Meerut.

I propose to give a slight sketch of the cantonment, that what I have to record may be the better understood.

Meerut stands in the centre of the Doab, or territory between the rivers Ganges and Jumna. The country from the ranges of the Himalaya for hundreds of miles towards Central India is an unvaried plain. Meerut is one of the oldest stations in India, and in years gone by was held by a division of troops so large as almost to be termed an army. Then it was a frontier post, but

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as the country advanced, so advanced the troops, leaving behind vast ranges of barracks, rows of bungalows, shops, roads, trees, and all the civilization that time and a great expenditure can alone produce. The barracks of the English troops occupied a line of great extent, fronting a noble parade ground, cleared from every impediment to the movement of men. The headquarters of the Bengal Artillery were on the right; the Rifles in the Infantry barracks were in the centre; and the 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers) in the Cavalry barracks on the left.

The military stations in India are on the plan of a camp. The lines occupied by the men face to the clear and open country; next come the hospital, cook-houses, gymnasia, canteens, and other buildings; and then the houses of the officers. To the rear of these in Meerut was a magnificent road termed the Mall, and behind that the space was filled up by numerous houses and bazaars. The only enclosed buildings were the Dum-Dum and the General Hospital; the former behind the Artillery, containing stores for that branch of the service; and the latter in

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rear of the Infantry. A wide space separated the Artillery and Infantry from the Cavalry, who occupied a long range of handsome barracks just completed.

The Native lines faced to the left of those held by the English troops, commencing about a mile or so to their rear. They were very commodious, having been built for seven battalions. The long rows of bungalows for the officers of these battalions, each surrounded by its compound, were separated from the chief or Suddur bazaar only by a street. This bazaar, in 1857, had more pretensions to be called a city than many of the most populous towns of India. If lines were drawn at right-angles from the right of the European and from the left of the Native barracks to the rear, at the point where they met, the square would be complete; and all that space containing many thousands of acres was crowded with the residences of civil and military functionaries, citizens, public buildings, and bazaars. The whole was shaded by the foliage of well-grown trees, and intersected with numerous and beautifully constructed roads.

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The walled city that gives its name to the station lies a short way behind the Suddur bazaar.

The great cantonment was built with no more regard to defence than Cheltenham or Manchester. Our maxim was that we must beat our enemy in the open field, or wherever he might be entrenched, or cease to rule in India. Armies had gone forth from Meerut to conquer provinces —no one dreamt that the time would come when we should there tremble for our lives. One of the objects for which the spot was selected was to overawe the Imperial city of Delhi, distant about thirty-five miles by a good road. It was not imagined that the turn of events could reverse this order, and that the period would arrive when the Imperial city would overawe the military station.

The troops passed through the bazaars, driving the Goojurs from the gardens of the houses. In the streets not a human being was to be seen, though half-an-hour before they were filled with the predatory tribes for which, in former years, this neighbourhood was notorious. A few mangled

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victims were taken from the ditches and the force bivouacked on the Mall, throwing a chain of sentries around their lines. So continuous was the musketry in the bazaars that it seemed as if a great action were going on; and amidst the cries of the frantic Goojurs and the blaze of the houses around, I venture to say that few slept that night within miles of the circle of Meerut.

The conduct of the Sepoys in avoiding the battle here offered damped the ardour of their Meerut partisans. They had boasted everywhere that they were more than a match for the European garrison; yet they fled, scarcely firing a shot not discharged at an unarmed man.

At dawn the brigade again marched on the Native lines, seeking out the enemy, whose course was not yet known, but at that time the Sowars were riding into the city of Delhi. Far over the clear and level parade ground a crowd of Goojurs hung like a cloud, and a similar body could be traced during the day in the neighbourhood of the European lines. For some time these men waited the evacuation of Meerut, or the destruction of the English, for on this they seem with



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confidence to have calculated. They were soon to learn the nature of the champion they had backed, and that those who intend to prey on British spoil must act with courage, and nerve every sinew for the enterprise. From amidst the yet smoking ruins of the houses, from the streets and from ditches, the remains of the murdered were taken; and with horror the officers saw the mangled bodies, scarcely to be distinguished, of ladies they knew well, lying naked on the ground, hacked with sabres. The soldiers picked up their comrades. The men spoke little; there was no outburst of feeling, though in their hearts was seared the memory of the scene.

Though I shrink from details, yet a sketch is necessary, for the horrible character of the outbreak is not fully understood in England. Frequently I have been asked if the reported murders and escapes were true, and even if any foundation existed for such reports. In the first instance, as usual, the nation exaggerated the crimes of the rebellion, and ended, in the reaction sure to follow, by disbelieving plain and true statements. To such a result tended the accounts of men who

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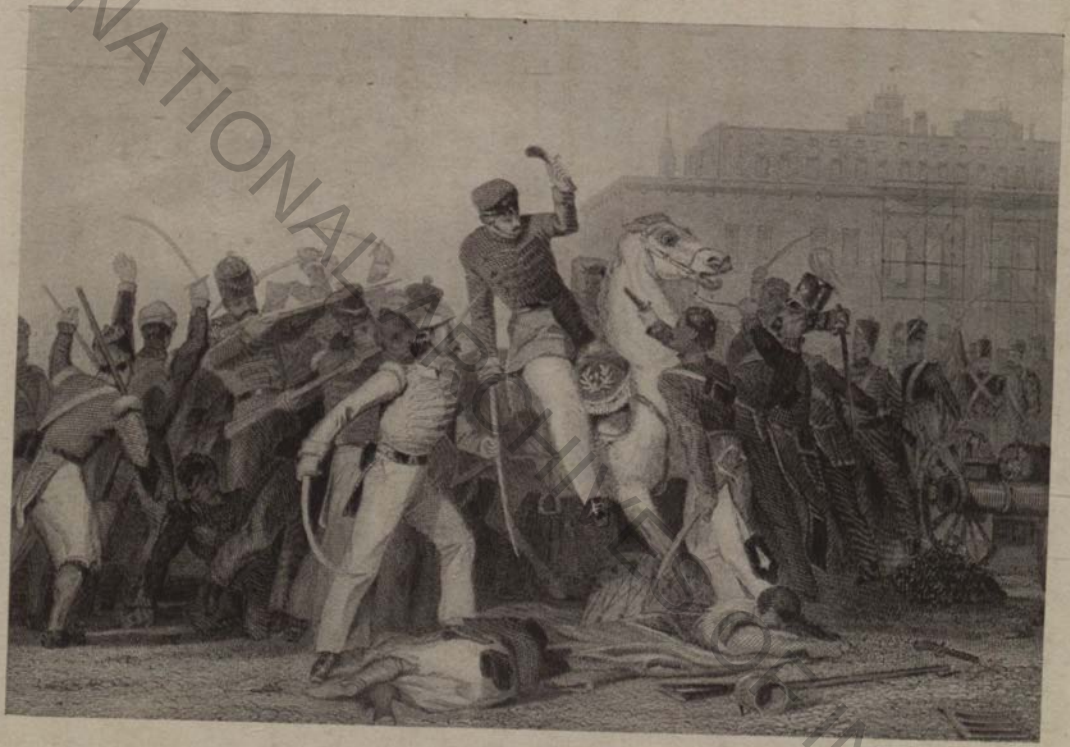

DEATH OF COLONEL FINNIS AT MEERUT
(THE OUTBREAK OF THE MUTINY ON 10TH MAY, 1857)

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saw the retribution, but not the provocation; who beheld the cringing figure and clasped hands of the wretch mercilessly consigned to the gallows —but not the yelling fiend with dripping sword and hands red with blood, mutilating the bodies of those who had never injured him.

I will take the first house, because a true type of what numbers throughout India were destined to become; and one spot of roadside, which furnished but a poor sample of many more terrible scenes.

Near the gaol stood a neat brick chunammed bungalow. This gaol held the Sowars, whose sentence of imprisonment had precipitated the revolt. It was situated behind the lines of their corps, and the first act of the Third Cavalry, who led the revolt, was to release their comrades and the other convicts in confinement.

It was Sunday evening and, I believe, a few friends had assembled in this house. They must have been surrounded and every hope of escape lost before even a conception of what was impending had entered their minds. The conclusions Colonel Muter formed were from what he saw. It



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seemed that they had fled to their bed and bath-rooms, seeking any hiding-place in their desperate extremity.

Attempts had been made to burn down the bungalow, which were defeated by the nature of the materials, and the volumes of smoke had only blackened the walls and the ceilings, as if to throw a pall over the tragic acts the fire refused to obliterate, leaving the place a charnel-house black with crime. The doors and window-frames had been torn from their positions, the furniture was gone, the matting in shreds and trampled by a thousand feet, the plaster soiled and broken.

Following in the flight of the inmates a bed-room was entered, where a pile in the centre attracted attention, requiring inspection to understand what it was. The proceedings, of which the proofs lay here, were difficult to realize, and took some time to comprehend. Men and women dying from sword-cut wounds must have been heaped upon their own broken furniture, till the vestiges left by the fire applied to the pile did not even tell the number of the victims. The walls were dark with smoke, the floor stained with

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blood, and the air tainted with the smell. It was easy to trace the rush of desperate men into the small adjoining apartments, where their bodies lay just as they had furnished subjects for the brave swords of the rabble to hack at and to hew. However sad may be the look of a soldier on the field after an action, there is no horror in the gaze of the dead who fell fairly with arms in their hands and the excitement of battle in their hearts. But it shocks even the sternest to see men murdered by their bedsides, and still more to see women. Before the frenzy of excess that suggested and carried out the funeral pile the soldier stood aghast; and an impression was produced perhaps never afterwards erased.

A little way from this spot two riflemen of my husband's company lay on the road in such a state that none save their own comrades could recognize them. On the evening preceding the Mutiny they had received an advance of pay with a furlough and were bound to the hills in a government bullock van, when they were attacked by the mob, the first in the attack being their driver. The body of a lady lay in a ditch on the

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other side of a slight embankment, so disfigured by wounds as to be with difficulty recognized. A track was discernible along the duct of the road from the bazaar to the place, showing clearly she had been dragged over the ground and thrown where she lay. The corpse of another murdered woman was in the same ditch a little beyond.

But why follow these details? Why wonder that our country-people cannot comprehend the full barbarity of these unprovoked massacres, when those who saw them recall the scenes more as a dream than as a reality—an enduring impression left by a hideous vision? This bazaar was only three or four hours in the hands of the mutineers; and as my mind wanders from cantonment to cantonment that fell wholly into their possession, a shifting scene of horror goes by, which I know only faintly portrays the facts.

It was probable the Mutiny would begin at a station held by European troops, from the fact that these only had the commanders possessing the power to coerce; and so it proved, for it was in the attempt to punish the mutinous conduct of the 3rd (Native) Cavalry that the revolt was

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precipitated. How much we owe to this precipitation may be best conjectured by considering the plan said to have been prepared by the Sepoys. On the Queen's birthday, which was to be celebrated one fortnight later, they were to parade according to their plot, with arms loaded and pouches filled with ball-cartridge. It was then the custom for British regiments to stand by the side of Indian battalions and fire a *feu-de-joie* in honour of the event. The captain of each company of Europeans then saw the service ammunition carefully removed, and its place supplied by three rounds of blank. While the English soldier was discharging his harmless powder in the air, the bullets of his Hindoo ally were to be directed to his heart.

The scheme was simple and practicable in the highest degree, and if carried out with secrecy and resolution, would have swept every European solider in one and the same hour from the face of India. A massacre more foul, more widespread, more disastrous, had never before been in the power of a people. Had it been carried out, Her Majesty would have had the heartrending

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reflection that her birthday was the blackest in the annals of a nation whose history extends over a thousand years, and whose operations embrace the globe. If ever in human events the hand of God has been manifest it was displayed during this perilous period. From the beginning of the outbreak to the fall of Delhi our career was a succession of miraculous deliverances; and perhaps there was no officer of experience and intelligence in the country who would have considered our escape possible, in the event of a general mutiny of the Bengal army, had that opinion been asked, before the Mutiny began. It is noteworthy that a minor but most important detail worked for our preservation on that eventful Sunday evening. In consequence of the increasing heat of the season, the hour for the service in the church had that day been ordered a half hour later. Had the battalion marched at the usual time, they would have been in the church and unarmed, an easy prey to the mutineers, who calculated on this position; whereas the 60th had not assembled, and to their surprise and consternation the mutineers saw the battalion march-

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ing down to their lines armed and fully accoutred for action.

General Hewitt, who commanded the Meerut Division, had been trained in a Native regiment. One of the points of such training was to place the utmost confidence in the valour and fidelity of the Sepoys. The officers boasted that these battalions had broken French regiments in fair and open fight, and had advanced in the face of dangers where even British troops had flinched. The effects of this teaching were seen when the Mutiny commenced. The officers of the regiments which had not yet mutinied pledged their lives on the fidelity of their men, and many fell victims to the noble feeling of reliance nothing could shake. These officers, with the same confidence, would have led their men against any enemy. It was not fair to expect the General to act in direct contradiction to this feeling, so carefully fostered by the nation itself.

The Native garrison, consisting of the 11th and 20th Bengal Infantry and the 3rd Cavalry, were about equal in numbers to the European soldiers. These men openly bragged of the courage

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for which they had been lauded in the despatches of a century, with all a native's hectoring. The people around believed in them. They were aided by tens of thousands of Goojurs and of camp followers. The three regiments rose suddenly on the station—unprepared—with arms in their hands and ammunition in their pouches. The surprise is that so little, not that so much was effected.

It is impossible to tell what the result would have been had they marched immediately on the European lines, or even defended their own against our attack—as was done with so fatal an effect at Jhelum. The first course might have been destruction, the last must have been disastrous to us; for the Sepoys were in a position to bear a heavy loss, while each European soldier killed was a direct step towards their goal.

Blame has been showered on the Meerut garrison for not pursuing the mutineers to Delhi. Leaving the existing circumstances out of consideration, the cantonment itself had to be safeguarded, being filled with Goojurs and badmashes intent on violence and plunder. The

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Carabiniers, on whom the pursuit would have devolved, had recently arrived, and consisted chiefly of recruits who could not ride, on horses not yet trained to carry a rider. The heat was that of a furnace, and to proceed in a pursuit of an acclimatized Native Cavalry regiment, mounted on trained horses, which would be received, housed, and fed at the end of their thirty miles' journey, would have been foolhardy in the extreme. With the European Cavalry it is terrible to think what their sufferings would unavoidably have been, without commissariat, without even water for men or horses. Any serious check at the commencement would have been ruinous to us. Might not such a check have followed the despatch of a few hundreds of men to a city filled with fanatics, and in the hands of a revolted garrison, consisting of regiments of all arms, complete in every appointment ?

The officer who had first to test the real value of these regiments, where such great interests hung on the result, might well pause to gather around him every element of strength. Subsequent events showed that the Sepoy had been overrated

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—that he ceased to be formidable when deprived of his English officers. Without them he was a tiger with his teeth extracted and his claws pared; and no answer could be more complete than this to the abuse so often heaped on our military officers. The English officer has led the battalions of Portugal to beat those of France, and the hordes of Turkey to repulse the regiments of Russia; he has shed on this Hindoo army a century of renown, and in the most isolated positions, supported by courage and strength of character, he has bent and swayed the wild tribes around, directing by force of will their untrained energies and valour into channels useful to his country; but by far the greatest of his exploits has been the conquest and fame his leadership has extracted from materials so worthless as this Hindoo army.

I believe that the Mutiny could not have been checked by the European garrison of Meerut, and that the immediate employment of this force in its suppression would have led to the most serious disasters. It was not a local disturbance, but one planned with elaboration throughout the country.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE first feeling at Meerut was akin to despair. The small body of British knew that they would be opposed to the whole Bengal army, in possession of immense magazines and stores, and from the savage manner the Goojurs, as well as camp followers, had handled the stragglers they met, the idea was that millions of Natives would be in insurrection around.

Those unacquainted with the climate of the North-West Provinces in May and June can form no conception of the task that fell to our countrymen. It was supposed to be impossible for us during these months to exist under canvas; and this opinion was calculated on by the Sepoys when planning the outbreak. Stringent orders were in force against exposure from a short period after sunrise until sunset; but notwithstanding every care and excellent barrack accommodation, many annually died from excessive heat.

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It was with no feelings of surprise that the tidings were received of the rise at Delhi, and the massacre of the Christian community. It will be an open question for history whether those massacres could have been prevented by any move of the Meerut garrison. The General and the Brigadier were much blamed at the time; and I think with as much reason as a well-found ship struggling in a hurricane might be blamed for looking on at an ill-found vessel overwhelmed by the same blast, without making a useless as well as dangerous attempt to save the crew. If a march on the Imperial city would have been a false move, endangering the Empire, the Christian community could not thus have been saved. Even had that move been made and been a success, it is doubtful whether it would have saved these people. All the arguments hinge on the supposition that the Native army would not have fought—a supposition in direct opposition to facts. For the same reason that the regiments at Meerut rose to save their comrades from imprisonment, the regiments at Delhi would rise to save them from the gallows.

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The following circumstance precipitated the Mutiny at Meèrut. On May 5th cartridges of the old kind, which they and their fathers had used, were served out to the 3rd (Native) Cavalry, when eighty-five men at once stepped out and refused to take them. The men were confined, brought to a court-martial composed of Native officers, and by those Native officers condemned to periods of imprisonment with hard labour varying from six to ten years.

General Hewitt then prepared to carry out the sentences. The mutineers were placed under a European guard composed of two companies of the 60th Rifles and twenty-five men of the 6th Dragoon Guards, and a general parade was ordered for the morning of May 9th. At day-break on that Saturday morning all the troops in the station, leaving the guards standing, paraded on the 60th parade ground; the Carabiniers, the 60th Rifles, the 3rd Light Cavalry (Natives), the 11th and 20th Native Infantry, a light field battery, and a troop of Horse Artillery. The Carabiniers and the Rifles were then ordered to load and be ready, and the Horse Artillery the

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same. This done, the mutineers were marched on the ground, the European troops and the Artillery guns being so placed that the least movement of disaffection would have been followed by instant slaughter. The mutineers were in uniform when marched in; they were stripped of clothes and accoutrements, and the armourer's and smith's departments of the Horse Artillery being in readiness, every man was ironed and shackled for ten years' imprisonment on the hard roads with the exception of five, whose period was limited to six years. After appealing in vain for mercy, the prisoners reproached their comrades of the 3rd Cavalry for permitting the sentence to be carried out. It was afterwards known that an understanding existed between the culprits and the Native soldiery, who had sworn that the sentence should never be carried into effect. No thought of the need of a European guard ever suggested itself, so the prisoners were handed over to the civil authorities and lodged in the gaol some two miles distant and placed under Native warders.

The Native soldiers returned to their lines, in

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the greatest excitement, and, it is said, immediately not only planned the outbreak that took place the following day, but sent word to the regiments in Delhi of their intention to rise and to be ready to receive them on their arrival at Delhi.

So complete and so secret were their plans that Mr. Greathed, the Commissioner, to whom all looked for the first intimation of danger, was wholly unaware of the proceedings, and therefore was unable to give a hint to the military. This has always appeared to me surprising, as for many months a feeling of unrest had existed among the Hindoos, a feeling that should not have been overlooked or minimized. Rumours had been widely spread that the Government intended to force Christianity upon them, and that this was to be done through the suppression of the system of caste, which could be best and most insidiously done by means of the greased cartridge for the Enfield rifle recently introduced to supplant the old "Brown Bess."

In Appendix (page 655, Vol. I., of Kaye's excellent 'History of the Sepoy War') we find



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the following interesting original orders drawn up by the Military Board in 1847 and approved by the Commander-in-Chief and the Governor-General :—

1. The ammunition of the two-grooved rifles is to be prepared as blank cartridge of three drachms of musketry powder, in blue paper, made up in bundles of ten.
2. The balls to be put up, five in a string, in small cloth bags with a greased patch of fine cloth—a portion carried in a ball-bag attached to the girdle on the right side, and the remainder in pouch.
3. Patches to be made of calico or longcloth and issued ready greased from magazines ; a portion of the greasing composition will also be issued with the patches for the purpose of renewal when required, and instructions for its preparation forwarded to magazine officers by the Military Board.

The following were the instructions issued :—

" The mode of preparing the grease and

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applying it to the cloth to be as follows: To three pints of country linseed oil, add one-fourth of a pound of beeswax, which mix by melting the wax in a ladle, pouring the oil in and allowing it to remain on the fire until the composition is thoroughly melted. The cloth is then to be dipped in it until every part is saturated, and held by one corner until the mixture ceases to run, after which it is to be laid out as smoothly as possible on a clean spot to cool. The above quantity of composition will answer for three yards of long-cloth, from which 1,200 patches can be made."

These instructions were approved by the Governor-General, Lord Hardinge, in a letter from the Military Secretary to the Adjutant-General, dated April 6th, 1847, and no subsequent cancelling order can be traced. On the contrary, the officer who held the post of Inspector of Ordnance during Lord Dalhousie's Administration, assured the historian that this composition continued in use up to 1857, so that it seems that the impression that the patches were greased with animal fat must have been erroneous. It is clear, from the disastrous results of such an idea, that the widest



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publicity should have been given to the true nature of the materials used, and every effort made to meet and remove all doubt; for the more the origin of the uprising is studied, the more evident it appears that the movement on the part of the Sepoys was more a revolt—with much of panic in it—against a suspected attack on their religion and caste, than as we all at first thought, a struggle for Empire.

It has often been said that the sight of a body of Dragoons crossing the bridge of boats would have changed the aspect of affairs, cowed the city, and quelled the mutinous spirit. It is a pity that the whole force of these Dragoons, backed by the Artillery and the Rifles—whose bullets afterwards told with such deadly effect—could not suppress the insurrection at the spot where it originated. This argument renders Euclid's axiom thus: "A part is greater than the whole," and makes it when so put of double force, as the Sepoys at Delhi were increased threefold, while our strength would have been diminished at least in that ratio, if we had despatched a force in pursuit—comparing the detachment

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with the Meerut garrison. I believe that the dust raised by the Dragoons would have been the signal for the massacre of every Christian in Delhi, and for a strife that might have ended in the massacre of every Christian in these Provinces. And in this I am also borne out by the occurrences in Meerut. The Sepoys, the camp followers, the Goojurs, hastened to kill when they rose; and though the English garrison was only a mile distant, its people could not be saved whom the mob had surrounded. With their fate before us, can it be supposed that the Christians, entangled in the most fanatical city in India, encompassed by walls, could have been preserved by a portion of that garrison, thirty-five miles off, who had failed in this very object in their own cantonment? If the insurgent Sepoys from Meerut had found the road barred and had taken another direction, it is clear the English in Delhi would have been in a similar position as those at Cawnpore or at Bareilly, and perhaps even fewer might have eventually escaped. The intelligence of the rise at Meerut at once made mutineers of all Native garrisons.

The subsequent history of every station in

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Bengal, where no European troops were quartered, was the record of an attempt to avert or delay the catastrophe, ending in a ride for life and a massacre. It cannot be supposed that the garrison would not be affected by the news, stationed as it was in the very focus whence the treason emanated. Sooner or later this portion of the Native soldiery was sure to rise, and the fanatical and disaffected citizens even more certain still—whether or not, a mutineer from Meerut had entered the capital of the emperor.

Within that fortified city was our greatest arsenal. Its name touches a chord in the Mussulman's heart, and its history gives it a political importance which neither its wealth nor population warrants. It was natural that the Mutiny should gather to a head in this strong city—strong in the moral power which the possession of the recognized capital of India gives—stronger still with the representative of the ancient emperors supporting the revolt from the seat where his ancestors had for centuries governed the empire, and stronger yet in all the materials of war.

As the Native regiments poured into Delhi the

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British residents in Meerut left their houses and concentrated in the Infantry and Artillery lines, abandoning the barracks of the Cavalry; and thus the whole force was grouped within a small circle. The Dum-Dum and the General Hospital were fortified; *chevaux-de-frise* bristled in front, and from embrasures the mouths of cannon menaced the surrounding country.

Within, the circle was full of life; officers and men lounged about, horses were picketed in long rows, guards held every post, sentries challenged in all directions, and gangs of coolies were constantly at work.

Outside this busy ring the country wore the most miserable aspect. The gardens around the desolate houses were hastening to decay; nothing stirred on the roads once so gay with life; here and there the blackened walls of a bungalow, destroyed on the tenth, stood drearily up; but the scene of the great ruin was in the Native lines. There, streets of houses had been consumed; and it is impossible to convey a just idea of its sadness. The charred rafters, the black walls, the broken carriage resting on a half-burnt wheel, the skeleton

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of a bullock lying on a bed of withered flowers—dead, for want of the water it once drew; the blasted trees, scorched in the great fire—all combined, with the recollection of the fate of the inhabitants, to form a picture so painfully desolate that the spot was rarely visited.

The bazaars were silent as if depopulated by a plague; scarcely a Native was to be seen. Trade had ceased; the telegraph-wire lay cut on the ground, and the poles were rotting by its side—no means of communication existed. Even the peasant ceased to cultivate, and it became difficult to believe that the district was one of the best tilled and the most populous in the world.

At night all this was strangely changed. The ceaseless boom of powder ignited in chatties sounded like cannon from the surrounding villages; the horizon was lit up by great fires, and officers speculated as they gazed at the glare of a distant flame on what village or town was being destroyed. Without intermission the sound of musketry continued from the neighbouring bazaars to warn off murderers and robbers who

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stalked abroad. Even within a short distance of our fortifications, a party who rode into a village found the inhabitants lying dead in the streets, and some women and children weeping over the bodies of their kindred.

So this Province that knew war only by tradition, or by the accounts of far-off battles—where even an execution was rare—became at once steeped in blood. Fire ran over the land, wholesale murder shocked mankind, and pillage and revenge took the place of law. It may be that the natural bent of the people, repressed by the hand of power, rebounded with violence when that pressure was removed. Men that could not be roused to patriotism rose to rapine; village wreaked its hoarded vengeance on village; man on man. The cruel Asiatic, in his frenzy, spared neither women nor children; and when these were the wives and little ones of his Saxon ruler, he struck a blow that stirred the deep heart of that master.

How far the people were really hostile we could not then ascertain, but it was clear that there was a large element in the population that

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eagerly seized the opportunity to give scope to their lawless instincts.

Some weeks previous to the outbreak I had noticed, when giving orders for dinner and telling what guests were expected, that the Khansamah who had to carry out my instructions was unusually sorrowful, and at last I remarked, "I do not wish to intrude into your affairs, but I perceive something is distressing you, and if it is anything in which I can assist you let me know." He then told me with tears he was troubled about his only son who had a severe malady in one of his legs. He had tried all remedies, and Native doctors had at last given up the case. "We will see what we can do," I said, and thereupon wrote a note to our clever surgeon, Sir John Ker-Innes, telling the Khansamah to take it himself, and to explain the symptoms. Sir John instantly came, saw the boy, ordered a plaister from the hospital of the 60th entirely to encase the leg, directed that it should not be touched for ten days, and then must not be removed except under his superintendence. At the expiration of that time Sir John Innes came, ordered the plaister to be

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removed with the result—a perfect cure! The father rushed into the house, not to tell, but to *worship me!* I told him I would leave the room, that all I had done was to invite a very clever surgeon to exert his talents to cure his child, and even that would not have availed, had not Allah blessed the steps taken.

Nothing, however, could disturb the impression on the Khansamah's mind that I had exerted a saintly influence in the case, and my ayah told me I was perfectly safe, in the anxious days still before us, for the Khansamah, a bigoted Mussulman, had undertaken to watch over me when I returned to our house, and Colonel Muter was absent on duty. As soon as it became dark he would conceal himself for the whole night among the trees of our garden, keeping close scrutiny on my doors.

Besides the families who had forsaken their houses the refugees from the district assembled in the Dum-Dum, and the life it then presented was new to us all. The principal buildings were three long barracks, and the families were there grouped together during the day—the ladies at

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work and the children at play—eating at long tables, and living more in public than accords with English tastes. Every available spot was covered with a tent, where the nights were passed; some held the guards of the Dum-Dum, and the wife of a judge, and the soldier on duty were placed in close proximity.

Terrible stories circulated freely in these barrack-rooms, for the thoughts of all were centred in one great object, and the eager anxiety for news rose almost to a mania. Manufacturers of *gup*,* as it was termed, had a lively time, and imagination was freely called into play; yet imagination and fiction, with every advantage, were beaten by the truth, for I remember no story, however horrible, that equalled the realities of Cawnpore.

The first rumours related to the march of the Sappers from the engineer station of Roorkee, and that of Major Reid's regiment of Goorkhas from Deyhra Dhoon. Great doubts were expressed regarding the fidelity of the former. First it was reported they had killed their officers and marched

* Gossip.

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for Delhi; next they were depicted as filled with horror at the conduct of the Cavalry and Infantry; but the strangest course was that they actually took, for they marched into Meerut only to murder their commander, and many of them to fall under the sabres of the 6th Dragoon Guards. The true and gallant conduct of Major Reid's Goorkhas, now historical, was even then scarcely doubted.

Among the fugitives were many who had escaped the massacre at Delhi. Tender women who had sprung down the fortifications amid a storm of bullets—who had waded through rapid rivers, and walked under a sun whose scorching rays cannot be known save by those who have felt them—stealing along paths occupied by a hostile population. What heroism, what endurance, what hair-breadth escapes! These plain narratives contained examples to nerve men's hearts for the terrible strife before them, and, if needs be, to show us all how to die with fortitude.

The surgeon had given me some rooms in the Rifle hospital until wanted for sick and wounded soldiers, and our servants and some furniture were moved to this asylum. These buildings were not

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so extensively fortified as the Dum-Dum, but the rooms were filled with the sick who were armed and, however ill, would turn out to fight if the necessity arose. I was thankful for the security, as my husband was constantly engaged on duty, a third of the battalion being required each night to rest on their arms on the Mall. My life here was much more quiet than in the Dum-Dum, though it was less sustained by companionship and the exciting tales there constantly afloat.

The news of the Mutiny spread through India like wildfire, and reached the Commander-in-Chief at Simla. Instantly the three regiments in the hills were ordered to Umballa, and the Delhi Field Force rapidly assembled there, under the personal command of General Anson. For a brief period the communication with Agra by telegraph was restored, and the General received his instructions to detach a large portion of his force to join the Commander-in-Chief and to proclaim martial law in the district. Then the waves of the rebellion surged over the country, and left Meerut like a rock isolated in a sea of trouble.

However, martial law had already been pro-

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claimed, and Meerut had tasted of the bitterness felt by the English, and infused into their acts by the proceedings I have described. A gallows had been erected not far from the burial-ground where lay the victims of the Meerut massacre. The first to suffer was a butcher who had taken the most active part in the murder of a lady; he had been captured gallantly by an officer, and was hanged by order of the General.

The most ferocious who had assisted in the fire and bloodshed that had desolated the station were to be found among our own camp followers. The butchers led, and it is said the tailors strove to vie with them; then came masons, carpenters, bakers and all the rabble who had rushed into the streets on that fatal evening to destroy the unarmed soldier in his afternoon stroll. The butchers followed the Sepoys to Delhi and perhaps took part in the crimes there perpetrated.

When this engrossing pursuit ended, they returned to Meerut to resume their avocations, where they were seized and compelled to undergo an ordeal which blanched the cheeks and shook the limbs of many who had been loudest in cry

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and foremost in cruelty and exposed them to each other as the cowardly ruffians they were. It was difficult to obtain evidence, and they were sent round the garrison, drawn up in a row; while company after company and troop after troop was halted before them, and the men asked if they could recognize any of the number as having been engaged in the riots. Most of their faces wore a deadly hue—some could scarcely stand and all their lips muttered prayers, the name of Allah alone being distinguishable.

The Natives condemned to death generally assumed a stoical indifference and moved with composure to the place of execution, sometimes picking their way over ground wet with heavy showers as if more concerned for their health than for their fate. It was then, and then only, in this terrible trial, they displayed any nobility of spirit.

In compliance with these orders from Agra, a wing of the 60th, a wing of the Carabiniers and a strong force of Artillery marched for Delhi on May 25th, and Colonel Muter was left in command of the wing of his regiment that remained. As

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he, with the few officers present, was required to sleep where the men lay on their arms, I was left much alone.

The fatal results of war were soon brought to our door. In a few days the column was met on the Hindun by a Native force from Delhi, when the test regarded by many with so much anxiety was tried. Here, for the first time, British regiments met our Sepoy regiments as deadly enemies. The ground was chosen by the Natives, and heavy artillery was most judiciously placed; but after a sharp action that artillery was captured and the enemy was driven back into the city. On the following day a second division drew across the road to dispute the passage of the column; they also were driven in confusion over the river, and the King heard in his palace the roar of the guns and saw the men who boasted that on their arms rested the empire, broken like sheep by the master-hand that had taught them to conquer.

Doolies* containing wounded men came back to the hospital, and amongst them a gallant young

* A light palanquin for carrying the sick.



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officer who had left us in high health and spirits, and whose life was now ebbing fast. Poor Napier was buried in the graveyard at Meerut, one of the earliest victims in battle of a war destined to swallow up a host. In that cemetery lie the victims of the first massacre, and near the bridge of the Hindun, to the right, as the traveller passes to Delhi, a mound covers the remains of those who first fell in the field. Under it rests Captain Andrews, to whom I had just bid adieu. He was killed at the head of a party of his men, after the capture of the guns, by the explosion of an ammunition waggon, and one of the worst cases among the wounded was that of a soldier who was standing near him at the time. This man had been picked up more like a cinder than a human being, yet, by care, he recovered; and it was a pleasure for me to supply to him and other brave men many little delicacies permitted by the doctors.

The column passed up the Jumna and crossed by a bridge of boats some twelve miles above the city, where they joined the Field Force. Not long after, this bridge was destroyed, and the

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left bank of the river fell into the possession of the rebels.

On June 8th the Field Force moved on Delhi; and at Badli-ka-Serai, some three miles outside the walls, they found the enemy in position. After a well-contested action the Sepoys were defeated for the third time, with the loss of their guns, and pursued to the walls of their stronghold. Then commenced a siege that will live long in history—a siege on which hung greater interests than on any other undertaken by our country, and the memory of which will last, a monument of the endurance and courage of the British soldier.

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## CHAPTER III.

When the detachment from our garrison had crossed the river, the road became clear and open between the rapidly increasing force of the mutineers and our cantonment. The spies of the "Intelligence Department" now constantly brought reports of the preparations at Delhi for the attack on Meerut. These accounts gave full particulars of the *durbars* held, the regiments ordered, the guns detailed, and the King's commands to the chief who was to direct the expedition. Spies were taken by us measuring the ditch, noting the guns, and our means of defence, and all held it was more than probable the attack would be attempted.

Immense preparations were made to repel the threatened assault; enormous fortifications arose around the Infantry barracks, enclosing the houses of the officers. Roads were cut across; the trees and mud walls of the compounds were

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cleared away from the front of the guns; masses of grain were stored; and a position was selected and strengthened on the open plain to meet the rebels on the march.

The extensive nature of these works imposed on the country, covered the real weakness of the position, and cowed the followers of the Mogul, who could find no general to command or troops to undertake a service attended with so much danger.

A few lighted arrows fired into the thatched roofs of our barracks would have burnt us all out, and left us exposed to the deadly rays of the sun. But the mutineers had broken away from all discipline and control, and given themselves up to riot and plunder, and from the capital, thronged with well armed and trained soldiers, scarcely an enterprise demanding courage and vigour was undertaken. The entire district was left to us; expeditions were constantly going forth from Meerut, and the severe and summary punishment inflicted on the insurgent villages kept in awe the unruly tribes of Goojurs around.

The tales of murder at Moradabad, at Bareilly,

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at Agra, at Lucknow, of mutiny in the camp, of treachery, even within our fortifications, kept us in a constant thrill of alarm. Now I heard of the overwhelming force of the rebels at Delhi; the death of the Commander-in-Chief, the hopelessness of the siege, of the capture of Calcutta; then dim rumours of Cawnpore, of the rise of Oude and Rohilcund, of the murder of Sir John Lawrence, and the insurrection in the Punjaub. Truth was strangely mixed with fable; some of the reports were wholly true, and most founded on probabilities. The real ignorance of events was harassing in the extreme, as our fate depended as much on circumstances occurring at extremities of the country, of which we could gain no tidings, as on those that more nearly concerned us.

In all our hearts was a painful anxiety how the news from India would be viewed in England. On that rested our ultimate preservation. If the nation, alive to the great emergency, put forth her mighty strength, we should be saved; if not, the chances were—we died. Month passed away after month, and the anxious desire for news

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GROUP OF OFFICERS (60TH) TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SIEGE BY SIR JOHN KER-INNES, K.C.B. (MUCH MARRED)

SIR JOHN JONES, K.C.B., IN CENTRE; THE REV. J. E. WHARTON ROTTON, CHAPLAIN TO "DELHI FIELD FORCE," IMMEDIATELY BEHIND HIM

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from home grew in intensity. That Delhi should fall; that our country should rise in wrath and deliver India, were the daily prayers offered up by the British community, now fairly at bay throughout these provinces.

When the sun had set the people assembled in the Dum-Dum in a circle, and the chaplain—the Rev. J. E. Wharton Rotton—repeated prayers and portions of Scripture, his extraordinary memory enabling him to do this without a book. That concluded the day, and nothing was afterwards heard save the call of the sentries repeating, from post to post, the cry, "All's well!"

My Khansamah, a bigoted Mussulman, became troublesome as the Mutiny progressed. He entered with interest into the rumours current in the bazaars, and retailed them to his fellow-servants in the worst light.

When transacting his market business with me he often inquired about the news from Agra, whither he seemed to turn most hopefully, and sometimes he ventured the remark that there was very bad news from that city. At the worst time of the siege of Delhi he earnestly applied

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for a few days' leave, which I granted; and I was afterwards informed he employed the period in visiting the besieged city, and inspecting its means of defence, as well as the character of the operations directed against it. I noticed a change in his manner on his return, as if the piles of artillery, the pyramids of shot, and the racks of the great arsenal, filled up to the ceiling with small arms, had inspired him with confidence, and he could foresee the approach of Mussulman ascendency, when Allah's name would resound over the land, and the followers of Mahomet alone be considered eligible for the loaves and fishes.

Among a people who find it difficult to tell a true tale, the stories circulated were more false than those in our circle. The wildest rumours gained ready credence with the Natives, and they firmly believed our power in India was at an end. The ayah, who looked on the Mutiny with dread, would come full of a tale of extermination she had obtained from the Khansamah, and I was obliged to warn him that his conduct might lead to serious consequences to himself. The ayah regarded the revolt from a professional point of

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view. "Who will give us bread," she asked, "when the ladies and children are murdered or driven from the land?" She had heard that before the English came, Natives of her class feared to wear good clothes, or to show signs of comfort, for such display led to extortion by the followers of the Rajahs and from Nawabs in whose districts they lived; and I am persuaded the truth of this was felt by numbers of the lower classes. I was able to speak in Hindustani sufficiently to ask for anything in common use, but not to converse in that language either fluently or grammatically. Yet I could understand much more than I could speak, and would listen with interest to all this Native woman had to say relative to her country and people. Sometimes she would peep into the room where I was sitting and, disregarding my preoccupation, glide in, squat on the floor at my feet, and look up with a smile. "Now, what is it, ayah?" I would ask. "Want to talk to Mem-Sahib," she would reply. "Not now; do you not see I am busy?" "Never mind, do that to-morrow"—and who could resist her handsome, loving, happy-looking face? In

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these talks, I also gained much intimate knowledge of the people. I became more and more convinced that this was a Sepoy revolt against what they feared was an attack on their caste and religion. The Mahomedans saw in its success a chance for the King of Delhi to regain power; and there are always in India vast tribes of thieves and unrestrained ruffians who, under the names of Goojurs and badmashes, are ready for riot, murder, and plunder at any period of anarchy and general unrest. The country, as a whole, was not against us; therefore, I consider it a misnomer to style it the "Indian Mutiny," when "Sepoy Revolt" is by far the more correct appellation.

From whatever cause, there can now be little question of the general fidelity of our servants during this trying period. Gentlemen speak in terms of high praise of the conduct of the syces—always close to their master's horse even under fire; of the water-carriers, dooly-bearers, and others, besides the house servants, many of whom fell in the campaigns. Our Mussulman water-carriers, however, left us during the gloomiest period to return to Moradabad, then in the hands

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of the rebels, though much kindness had been shown to both, who were father and son.

It is certain that the assumption of power and confidence on the part of the English, greatly swayed the Natives with whom they came in contact, and much contributed to the defeat of the revolt. The people were treated with extreme harshness and the servants often met with bad usage. The good and evil qualities of our race told alike in our favour in the emergency. The courage and vigour and haughtiness and stubborn pride, the insolence and even the cruelty, half disdainful, half revengeful, all spread their influence around, and individual men thus upheld in whole districts the prestige of our rule. Not one act of revolt was committed by the people of Meerut after May 10th; and although numbers were executed, no signs of disaffection were shown.

Among those who sought protection within our fortified circle were the nuns of the Convent of Sirdhana, a pretty place about ten miles from Meerut, the property of the late Dyce Sombre. Apartments in the hospital had been allotted to

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them, and I visited the Lady Superior. I was much struck with the beauty of one of the Sisters, Madame St. Anthony. She gave me an account of the mutiny at Sirdhana, of the tumultuous gathering of the Natives, and the way they threatened the convent. A man from the town offered them protection for one hundred and fifty rupees. While the Lady Superior was considering, another came forward with a similar demand. As such negotiation was fruitless, the ladies determined to trust alone in Providence. Calculating that plunder would be the chief object, they all assembled on the flat roof of the large building, and taking only the Host with them, they awaited the result, when they were relieved by a party of volunteers from Meerut.

On my expressing sympathy for their alarm, she said with a placid smile: "No alarm was felt, for they were prepared." However strongly her mind and her faith may have sustained her, she was physically unequal to such shocks, and I was deeply grieved a few weeks later to hear of her untimely death.

But these were times when death was in many

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instances a blessing. The very air of India was charged with horrors. The weary watching, the sickening expectation, and the wearing effects of the climate had a depressing tendency that required much resolution to struggle against, and all the consolations of religion to sustain. The men were relieved by action, but for the women there was not this resource. The Roman Catholic priests of Meerut directed the members of their church to repeat the seventy-ninth Psalm with their daily devotions, and we all sympathised in heart and spirit not only with that, and the forty-sixth Psalm, but with all the promises of protection and blessing in answer to earnest prayer contained in the Book of Books.

A regiment of Seikhs was detached to Meerut and two hundred of the 60th, one hundred Artillerymen, and the wounded who had recovered were directed to join the camp before Delhi, and on the night of August 26th my husband left me, to command this party of his regiment.

I will not attempt to enlarge on my feelings during this unhappy period of my life.

When the fortifications had been completed

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around the houses we returned to our homes, and, after my husband had marched for Delhi, a young lady—Miss Custance, daughter of Colonel Custance of the Carabiniers—left the Dum-Dum to stay with me.

Though the inactivity of the Sepoys added to our confidence and allowed of our emerging so far, still the country was considered most unsafe beyond our lines for any except armed parties.

The massacre of the garrison that surrendered at Cawnpore, of which we had garbled and unreliable accounts, had capped the folly and bloodthirstiness of the rebellion, had nerved every garrison with despair and every Field Force with revenge, and had thus done more to defeat the object of the rebels than any other act of the sad drama. England owes more to the massacre at Cawnpore than, perhaps, she will readily believe. We knew that between us and this revolt there could be no terms, no quarter, no rest; and when we looked on the gigantic task before us, utterly to destroy the army we had made, it was no wonder that many despaired of the result. Myriads in India listened with eager anxiety for

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intelligence from Delhi. Already tribes of Natives away on the horizon of our Empire were gathering their arms, and songs of exultation were beginning to arise from those who hated our rule.

Even close to our cantonment a great brigade had passed, destroying the station of Haupper, almost within sight; and marching in triumph to Delhi, with miles of hackeries containing the plunder of Rohilcund.

The sullen sound of the Delhi artillery seldom failed to reach a listening ear in Meerut. In the stillness of the night its low roar now came with a deeper meaning, and caused a greater emotion than before. The roar of an enemy's gun sounds strangely, and carries with it as great a thrill to the heart of a soldier who hears it for the first time as to that of the citizen engaged in his peaceful pursuits.

But the siege was now hastening to its close. The great crisis had come; all the available force had been poured into the camp before the city, and it remained for General Wilson to take Delhi or to lose India.

Those who know India can alone fully com-

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prehend the situation. All through the crisis our sway was greatly upheld by the force of opinion. The effects of a long career of victory cannot be effaced in an hour. There is reason to believe the opposition would have been more general if both Princes and people had then not had an innate feeling of terror at exciting the wrath of the lordly lion, though half persuaded he was mortally wounded and his days numbered. To maintain this feeling an uninterrupted course of victory is necessary, or a blow so crushing that the previous check only makes its effects more visible. Thus Aliwal and Sobraon were required to restore the drawn battles of Moodkee and Ferozeshah, which shook our power to its foundation. It is therefore incumbent on us to overcome all opposition, for if a Native ruler can erect a stronghold and successfully defy us, the country would quickly become covered with such fortifications and our rule with contempt. A check in the field, a delay in the storm of a city, excites far and near the attention of hostile communities, and may raise a commotion that would require a combined effort of the nation to withstand.

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During a period of such intense and widespread excitement, which fixed on the proceedings in India the rapt attention of all its people, and of every nation of Asia, it became absolutely essential to re-establish our prestige by a stroke that smote into the dust the city most calculated to draw interest and to awake enthusiasm, and which had withstood our authority for many months. So the *prestige* that told against the revolt in one way, told against ourselves in another; for while it frightened many a Prince into good behaviour, it made the capture of Delhi and the advance of Havelock necessities of our existence, though both extremities of war.

It was under such trying circumstances that the Maharajah of Patiala, a neighbouring Native Prince, extended his aid to the Delhi Field Force, and evinced high moral courage and the greatest loyalty to the British Empire; keeping our communications open with the Punjaub, whence alone aid could come, and rendered possible the conveyance of the siege guns sent by Lord Lawrence, without which the storming of Delhi could not have been accomplished. This friendly Prince



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is no longer alive, but when his son arrived in London to attend the Coronation, I wrote a short letter to a London paper expressing the hope that for the valuable help rendered to us in our critical position before Delhi, every consideration would be shown to his son during his visit to London, but no notice was taken of my letter, which, I suppose, found its way to the waste-paper basket.

On September 7th the operations commenced that were to decide the momentous question; and on the 20th the British ensign floated over the Imperial Palace. Short as was this interval, it was an age to me.

The country between Delhi and Meerut is almost as level as the floor of a room. By putting my ear to the ground I could hear the guns, and by dint of practice I could detect any difference in sound. I at once perceived the opening of the siege guns and flew into the house to tell Miss Custance that the assault had begun. I looked at the clock and afterwards found I had been correct.

Although within sound of the guns our intelligence was often inaccurate and unreliable. The mails carried round by Paneeput took days to

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reach us; but on the morning following that great day* when the columns advanced to the storm of Delhi, a native runner arrived with the news. He said he had been borne across the bridge of boats in a throng so great that his feet could scarcely touch the ground, and the country around was covered with the fugitive army and denizens of the imperial city.

As rumours to this effect had often been received, the man was secured, with the promise of reward if the account proved true, and if false of a punishment which would have left him nothing more to hope for in this world. On receipt of further news our joy was considerably modified. An entrance had, indeed, been effected, though with immense loss of life, and the force was still fighting for its existence in the streets of Delhi.

The deep, low sound which had spoken such volumes to my heart had, indeed, ceased; yet I knew the warfare then going on to be more deadly, though less loud, and my anxiety was rather increased than diminished.

* September 14th, 1857.



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The country was hushed—every ear was open, every head outstretched for intelligence of this decisive struggle. Perhaps never before on so few British bayonets had hung so great a cause, and never before was news received in India by our race with more deep-felt joy and thankfulness to our Heavenly Preserver than that of the final and glorious close of this great siege.

Delhi was the lists where was fought out the challenge from the Native army. The prize for the victor was India—for the vanquished, death.

When Delhi fell, the failure of the Mutiny was decided; and the after-campaign was a mere race of the vanquished from a pursuing fate.

It was not, however, the triumph to our arms, the display of British courage, nor the political results obtained that so filled with thankfulness the English community in these Provinces; our lives were wrapped up in the siege; the existence of every Christian depended on the success of our force; and though England might have reconquered her Indian Empire had the attack failed, that Empire, till such reconquest, would undoubtedly have been lost.

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## CHAPTER IV.

I AM not sure of the exact numbers, but, approximately, it has been computed that the loss on September 14th, the day of the assault on Delhi, was—

| | Europeans. | | Natives. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Killed. | Wounded. | Killed. | Wounded. |
| Officers | 8 | 52 | 103 | 310 |
| Rank and File | 162 | 510 | | |

Of course, as the street-fighting was kept up for a week, till we obtained possession of the Palace on September 20th, the casualty list must have been much increased.

The entire effective force before Delhi has been estimated at :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| European Artillery | 580 | |
| „ Cavalry | 514 | |
| „ Infantry | 2,672 | |
| | | 3,766 |
| Native Artillery | 770 | |
| „ Cavalry | 1,313 | |
| „ Infantry | 3,417 | |
| Engineers, Sappers, and Miners, etc. | 722 | |
| | | 6,222 |
| Grand Total | | 9,988 |

To the above add Cashmere contingent of 2,200 men with four guns, and cavalry of the

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Jhind Rajah 400 men, making the full number amount to 12,588.

The enemy at this time was believed to number 40,000 men.

It is not my intention to discuss the circumstances of the first, second, and third columns of attack on the city, but to confine myself to what occurred to the fourth column operating at Kissengunje, on which alone any controversy arose. This might have been thought impossible, as Colonel Muter did all that was done; he it was who sent in his despatch with those of the three others through Sir Archdale Wilson; he received commendation for the "judicious" way he withdrew the column out of the utmost confusion. He also was awarded his Brevet-majority and the Command of the Hill Station of Murree, in the Punjaub, for this very service. Colonel Muter himself fretted over the position, because it had been impossible to advance. Subsequent operations proved that had the column penetrated into the city at that suburb, the whole of the little force would have been annihilated; for special care had been taken to render the entire

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distance to the Lahore Gate, as the Sepoys thought, impregnable.

Sir John Kaye, in his dispassionate 'History of the Sepoy War,' publishes the explanation Colonel Muter sent him, as he says, "detailing his own movements, and the events of which he was an eye-witness":—

"My company (60th Rifles) led; subdivision advanced in skirmishing order; the other in support, at head of column. The movement, delayed for guns, which did not come, was then so rapid that the skirmishers could do little to cover. A bridge had to be crossed over a canal (dry) right under the walls of Kissengunje, held by the enemy in great strength, and the fire was heavy. Here Major Reid was wounded and his fall checked the advance of his Goorkhas he was leading. The 1st Bengal Fusiliers passed through at 'the double,' and continued the rush in front or along the wall, suffering from the fire as they made for the street which opened to the left and where the Sepoys were gathered in force. Here, in front of the Fusiliers, McBarnett was killed; as a captain, senior to me. Then the 61st came

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up, but the confusion had become great as detachment after detachment got mingled on the other side of the bridge, with the enemy all the time firing from loopholes some fifty yards away. Parallel with the canal ran a low stone wall, behind which the exposed men sought shelter, and presently that wall was lined, and the fire against Kissengunje maintained. My men had joined in the rush of the detachments as they came up, and had got mixed in the *mêlée*, which made the position so peculiarly difficult for the various officers in command. We could neither give orders nor get them executed, and we were fighting with this deep canal (for it was deep and difficult) in our rear. The Guides under Shebbeare had come up, and, having escaped the confusion into which the detachment had fallen on the failure of the dashes made in succession to gain the street, were comparatively in order. Shebbeare said, 'You had better assume the command. We must make a desperate effort to break away from this cover.' The 'assembly' was sounded, and soon a group of officers was gathered. Then the 'advance' and, waving our

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swords, we went over the wall calling on the men to follow. The bugle notes aroused the enemy, and the fire became furious—so withering that it was almost impossible to live for a few minutes exposed to it.

"The Adjutant of the Guides was killed as he mounted the wall. Shebbeare was shot through the cheek, and the number who fell on the instant effectually checked the movement. Having failed in this I went to our right to see if we could work round, and there I met the Engineer officer, with whom I consulted. To take ground to our right would be to expose our position on the range to attack, utterly denuded of troops, all being drawn off for the attack on Delhi. While speaking to the Engineer officer he was, as we all supposed, mortally wounded. Then I returned to see how we could best withdraw, and heard that Shebbeare had been again hit. It was under these circumstances I decided to send a message to the Crow's Nest Battery to open on the enemy regardless of us. A young officer carried that message with great rapidity, and while awaiting the opening of the big guns I encouraged the

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withdrawal of the wounded, and by this time, for we had been long under fire, the force had considerably dwindled. Lieutenant Evans, the young Artillery officer in charge of the Crow's Nest Battery, had fortunately prepared for the emergency, and he could see from his commanding height that our attack had failed. With the utmost precision, he pitched his shrapnel over our heads and enabled us to withdraw with an ease otherwise impossible. But for this, the retreat might have been disastrous.

"I have always given Lieutenant Evans great credit for his part in this, both for being prepared and for the way in which the guns were handled in a fire of shrapnel directed a few feet over our heads. The representation I made procured for Shebbeare the Victoria Cross, which he had well earned.

"When Major Reid got well he took me over the ground to show what he intended. His design was to run close up to the wall and along it, trusting to the enemy being unable to shoot straight down—almost perpendicularly—on to the street, up which, if he could sweep, he hoped to get

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the Sepoys on the run and keep them going. But he fell, and no one on the field knew his plan."

When we were at Murree, where my husband was commanding the station, given the appointment for this very service, Major Richard Lawrence was there, and General Sir Henry Norman wrote a series of questions relating to the fourth column attack on Kissengunje. Colonel Muter immediately wrote for an interview with Major Lawrence to talk the matter over and compare notes; but Major Lawrence declined. Colonel Muter wanted to be perfectly accurate. At Delhi there was no question about the facts. Major Lawrence had no troops at Kissengunje, for the Cashmeries made their attack in another column. When some years ago I published my experiences in the Mutiny and elsewhere, I wished to introduce my husband's part in the fourth column, but he prevented me, saying I was writing my recollections, not his, and the mistake has been, that, in common with all brave men, he has been too modest. Major Lawrence, who came in a political, not a military capacity, contended that he should have succeeded to the command of the column

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on the fall of Major Reid, but as he did not, and in the exigencies of the struggle my husband did all that was possible, it seems childish to raise such a question.

Major Lawrence objected to three passages in the narrative of the 'Siege of Delhi,' published by Sir Henry Norman :—

1. "The fourth column, under Major Reid, advanced from the Subzee Mundi towards Kissengunje, the *Cashmere contingent* co-operating on its right. The latter, however, was so sharply attacked by the insurgents who were in great force, that, after losing a great number of men and four guns, *they were completely defeated and fell back to camp.*

2. "Major Reid's column met with the most strenuous opposition, *greatly increased doubtless by the failure of the Cashmere contingent.*

3. "Captain Muter, 60th Rifles, the *next senior officer, judiciously withdrew the troops to their former posts* at Hindoo Raos and in the Subzee Mundi." *

It is well known that without guns the little force would simply have been annihilated had it persevered in the attack.

* The italics are not mine.

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## DESPATCH OF CAPTAIN DUNBAR DOUGLAS MUTER, 1ST BATT. 60TH ROYAL RIFLES, ON FOURTH COLUMN OF ATTACK AT SIEGE OF DELHI.

*From Captain D. D. Muter, Her Majesty's 1st Battalion 60th Royal Rifles, to Major R. S. Ewart, Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General, dated Camp, Delhi, September 17th, 1857.*

At dawn on September 14th the column of attack on Kishengunje, in the order and strength as per margin, was drawn up at the Subsee Mundee Serai, under the command of Major Reid.

| | |
|---|---|
| 60 Rifles | 50 |
| Sirmoor Battalion | 200 |
| 1st Fusiliers | 160 |
| Guides Infantry | 200 |
| Coke's Corps | 25 |
| Kumaon Battalion | 65 |
| Her Majesty's 61st Regiment | 80 |
| Total men | 780 |

The Jummo contingent commenced the attack before our artillery had arrived, and Major Reid, wishing to support the attack, moved down the road in a column of fours, covered by twenty-five Riflemen in skirmishing order.

The enemy opened fire from the bridge over

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the canal, and from behind walls and the loop-holed serai of Kishengunje. Major Reid fell wounded in the head. The fall of their gallant leader checked the advance of the Gurkhas. The Fusiliers came to the front at the double, led by Captain Wriford.

The rush of the Rifles and Fusiliers placed them for a moment in possession of the breast-work at the end of the serai, but those men, unsupported, were unable to maintain the position under the heavy flanking fire to which they were exposed.

The Native troops lined a garden to the right of the road, and Lieutenant R. H. Shebbeare, whose gallantry in this trying affair was the admiration of every one, with a few of the Guides and some Europeans, took possession of a mosque. Every effort was made here to re-form the troops, and charge the enemy's position, but without success, though many officers sacrificed themselves in the attempt.

As I observed columns of the enemy's horse and foot taking ground to our right, and as I saw they were in great force to our front and left

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flank, I considered the object of the attack so far gained in having directed the attention of the enemy from the main point of attack. Fearing also that the enemy's great strength might encourage him to attack our batteries on the hill, I thought it right, as I had succeeded to the command on the fall of Major Reid, to re-occupy the position from which we had been withdrawn. This was accomplished with little further loss, under cover of the Crow's Nest Battery, which fired shrapnel and shell a few feet over our heads, and with the most admirable precision and fatal effect to the enemy.

This battery was commanded by Lieutenant H. J. Evans, of the Artillery.

I cannot close this report without mentioning the noble way in which two officers and one sergeant fell in the attack. Captain G. G. McBarnet, attached to the 1st Bengal Fusiliers, died at the head of his men at the first rush, and Lieutenant A. W. Murray, of the Guides, was killed while gallantly seconding his immediate superior, Lieutenant Shebbeare, who was himself struck by two bullets. I am much disappointed

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in learning that Sergeant Dunleary, of the Fusiliers, a man whose conduct was conspicuous throughout, was killed in the field.

Annexed is a statement of our loss, which, I regret to say, has been very heavy.

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The street-fighting, after an entry had been effected, was of a trying and dangerous character, The Khansamah afterwards told me that on one occasion when he had got into a house in a street the 60th were occupying, he spread a serviette for a table-cloth, and had got a good steak for the Sahib's dinner, but the Sepoys regained possession of the street and the dinner was lost —procured with such difficulty. The officers poured out the wines and spirits into the streets lest they should demoralize the men. The Sepoys hoped our troops would become intoxicated and useless to us.

An obelisk to the memory of those of the 1st Battalion 60th Royal Rifles, officers and men, who fell at Delhi has been erected at Dover.

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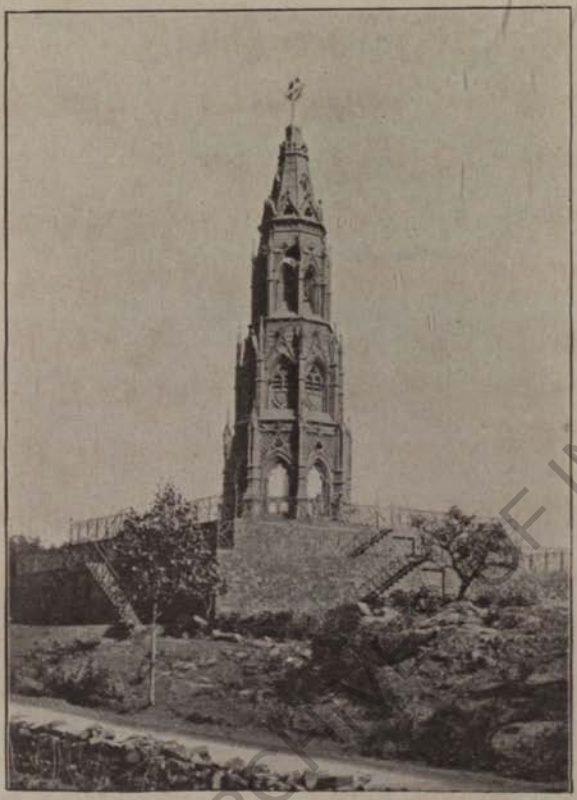

MONUMENT ERECTED ON "THE RIDGE" BEFORE DELHI TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE WHO FELL IN THE SIEGE

MEMORIAL ERECTED AT DOVER TO OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE "DELHI FIELD FORCE" WHO DIED IN THE OPERATIONS, 1857

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## CHAPTER V.

As giving several graphic details of what occurred at Meerut at the time of the outbreak, yet never hinting at the great service my husband performed in saving the Treasury, which he simply regarded in the light of ordinary duty, I think this article will interest the reader :—

### INCIDENTS OF THE SEPOY MUTINY.

(From *Englishman*, Calcutta.)

By Colonel D. D. Muter.

On New Year's Day (1858) the *Daily Telegraph* published one of those life-like sketches of sporting men which often emanated from the pen of the Hon. Francis Lawley. On the subject of "Turf Reminiscences" that writer had no equal; and although I know nothing of racing and only met General Anson when Commander-in-Chief in India, his graphic account brought vividly to my memory a picture that had almost faded from my recollection. The story moves around New-



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market and high life in London; but its sequel is in India in the most stormy and threatening period of British rule. The grace with which Mr. Lawley introduces Mrs. Anson is one of the charms of his style, and it recalls the scene shortly before the Mutiny, when the party on their way from Calcutta to Simla halted at Meerut, the great cantonment formed to overawe the fortified city of Delhi, distant, as the crow flies, thirty miles, our strongest arsenal, the seat of dynasty which still titularly maintained the insignia of royalty, and was regarded with veneration amounting to superstition everywhere among Mahometans.

The Mutiny was there being planned, and the intention was for the native troops to surround the British force, unarmed in Church, and precipitate the revolt by a massacre that would startle the world. General and Mrs. Anson attended divine service, and, if I do not mistake, the Bishop of Madras on that Sunday preached on the text, "There shall be showers of blessings." The Bishop had, perhaps, scarcely got back to his own diocese before these showers

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fell in brimstone and fire on the land he had left, as over Sodom and Gomorrah. The party of the Commander-in-Chief was grouped outside; the ladies waiting for their carriage to draw up, and the Colonel of 1st Battalion 60th Royal Rifles—a battalion to which the country owes a debt of gratitude—descended the steps. I saw the ladies turn their heads to conceal a smile as the gallant officer hobbled down, for though a fine man, he was infirm on his feet. He lived to command an army, to obtain the sobriquet of "The Avenger" and to die a distinguished General, yet he did not present the beau ideal of a Rifleman. The Ansons passed up to Simla and, shortly after, Mrs. Anson—said in her day to have been one of the most beautiful women in London—and her daughter returned to the more congenial if less bright clime of their native land. Neither she nor her husband were destined again to meet; and both were reserved for tragic deaths.

The mutineers did not succeed in carrying out their plan of surprising and massacring the British in the church; but the Native regiments



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rose on Sunday, May 10th, 1857, and the tumult, and sound of musketry and roar of voices filled the air as the soldiers gathered unarmed on the parade ground for divine service that afternoon.

Presently the whole camp was alive, and the profound stillness of the European portion of the large cantonment was stirred as by inspiration. From every direction the native guards were stealing away, and soon wounded men and others who had fled for their lives hurried into the barracks to tell their tale of murder and rapine. Without any word of command, all the soldiers in their white clothing rushed towards their lines, and quick as thought came streaming out dressed in green and accoutred. Before the officers had assembled the parade had been changed from peace to war, and shortly after the solid heavy tread of troops on the march was heard along the roads leading to the parade grounds that faced the Sepoy quarter. As the British force drew up in front of the native lines, extending perhaps a mile and a half, the whole was a wall of flame, a conflagration few men had

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ever witnessed in extent. It fell to the writer to direct the first fire opened in the Mutiny. Sir Archdale Wilson, the Brigadier, had ridden away under the bullets of his own guard, and my company, as the advance guard of the force, had been thrown into skirmishing order when the troops defiled on the "maidan." Sir Archdale was close behind and I went to him and asked:—"Are we to load with bullets and shoot straight?" "Yes; for execution, you see the position";—and the men loaded. As they drew near the babel of voices rising from behind the sheet of flame directed the first bullets, which I may add were from Enfield rifles, then a novelty in the Army, and only just introduced at Meerut; indeed, to its cartridge the Mutiny has been with some truth ascribed. As our bullets tore through the gardens around the officers' houses, cutting down bushes and singing in the ears of the Pandies, the hubbub drew away towards the road to Delhi, hastened by the Horse Artillery, which, galloping up and unlimbering, made it hotter for those behind the wall of flame. What followed is a matter of history. Delhi fell to the mutineers; the Emperor

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was recognised as their Sovereign; and the British in their cantonment were face to face with the Sepoy army gathering in force in the Imperial city, fortified, having inside its walls the chief arsenal of the country, with all the siege artillery and munitions of war in their possession.

The fight for the Empire that followed has not yet been fully told. On it hinged at least the immediate fate of India and the lives of nearly all the Europeans. Nothing but a series of providences saved the position, which looked as black as night when the Commander-in-Chief descended from the hills and reached as far as Kurnaul on May 27th, just seventeen days after the outbreak. That cantonment, long ago the great frontier camp, was an abandoned station not far from Delhi, a scene of desolation with houses once handsome, tenanted only by wild animals, and falling into ruin, presenting a type, when the General reached his last resting-place, of what India would be from the Sutlej to the sea if he failed in his mission.

The General had descended from the serene

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and genial temperature of Simla, at an elevation of 7,000 feet, into the plains, to move in tents through an atmosphere which danced and glowed, for you can there see the heat in May. The wind passed as through a furnace. Nothing living appeared on the white baked plain after the sun had well risen. A fruitful land bore the appearance of an arid desert, but terrible as was the contrast in climate, politically and martially the position was infinitely more trying. No man knew what the day might bring forth. If the Punjaub rose, India was lost. If the Gwalior contingent, the best appointed and finest of the feudatory forces, marched on Delhi as a hostile army, the British force must be swallowed up. Fortunately, the Native Princes waited in a similar uncertainty on events, to learn how they would turn before anything decisive had happened. General Anson succumbed under the terrible trial and died of cholera at Kurnaul.

Mr. Lawley says that when General Anson was gazetted to the command in India the newspapers with one accord, always hard and unjust to racing and sporting men who endeavour to be

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something else, "opened fire on the obscure and untried soldier." Yet General Anson died in harness, weighed down by the tremendous exertion required to set that army in motion, he himself taking the lead. Such was the nature of the work thus suddenly thrown upon the chief, that the General who succeeded on his death, hardly lasted three months, and was buried near the city before which the small British Force Anson gathered, toiled and died; and perhaps no regiment ever more greatly distinguished itself than did that 1st Battalion 60th Rifles, though there were no war correspondents on the spot to send home the accounts which gave the place of honour to Lucknow as if the vital struggle had not centred at Delhi.

Sir Archdale Wilson, who had succeeded on the death in succession of the two senior officers, had to endure—perhaps with all the more persistency because his communication was only open in one direction—the same "on to Richmond" cry which broke many a Union General during the great Confederate war. Lord Lawrence was peremptory in his demand that Delhi should

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THE STORMING OF DELHI

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be taken or the army would perish. Better lose the army than the Empire; and if action is not prompt, the Empire will be lost. When at last Sir Archdale broke into the city and pushed his columns through its thoroughfares in the vain effort to sweep out its hordes, he was foiled all round. He held one corner, and had it not been for a gallant Engineer officer he might have fallen back. On September 14th the assault was delivered, and for a whole week the fight in the city was maintained. All the time the Gwalior contingent, the most complete Native army in India, hung like a storm-cloud over the operations, but native like, it moved, after Delhi had fallen and India had been saved, to meet the advancing regiments fresh from England, and inflicted on Wyndham's a defeat at Cawnpore.

The "showers of blessings," which do not come as we regard blessings, are realised long after the events that startle and confound us. General Anson perished among the first victims, perhaps almost in despair of saving the country. Strange to say, there was a native prophecy that one hundred years after Plassy, the Raj of "John

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Company" would end. This proved to be true; but did not fit into the conclusion of the mutineers. The East India Commercial Company ceased, and the rule passed to the Queen. The restrictions beyond which that Empire had grown were removed, and a more enlightened sway followed on the overthrow brought by the great Mutiny.

In the sketch an incidental remark tells how isolated, cut off from all communication was the force collected by Anson at Umballa and by Sir Archdale Wilson at Meerut, for though the Commander-in-Chief died May 27th, it was not till the middle of July that the fact appears to have reached England. We were literally in the midst of a population apparently, but not really hostile, the army only knowing and commanding within the limits its scouts could reach. By observation from the heights overlooking Delhi held by our outposts, the arrivals of fresh garrisons of mutineers only became known by the stir in the city and the sure attack which next day followed; the fight for life often being inside these lines perpetrated by men wearing

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British uniforms, acting under British words of command, and using arms from British arsenals. This awful trial of endurance lasted for months, but may be said to have culminated on the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Plassy, when the most protracted and determined attack was defeated. Never after did the Sepoy fight as before—it was then the struggle for life—not for Empire.

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GENERAL JOHN NICHOLSON

(Who Commanded the Storming Party in the Assault on Delhi. He was shot through the Chest and died a few days later)

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# PART II

# DELHI

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE fall of Delhi opened a direct communication between Meerut and the Field Force, and several officers took the opportunity to pass to and from the capital city. My husband sent to me to say it was safe for me to come to Delhi and to lay my *dak** at the time Sir John Jones was to go. I did so, and about 3 a.m. was awaiting the *gharry* † in some trepidation, as I had not yet left the Queen's lines since the first night of the outbreak, when suddenly I heard the *purdah* ‡ pulled aside, and in came my husband, bronzed beyond recognition, wearing a beard that covered his chest, but on his face the ever-welcome smile of affection and pleasure. For fully five minutes I lost all power of speech, the surprise was so great. "Come," he said, "we must not delay. I felt so uneasy at the thought you would travel alone, as there are still Native cavalry roaming

* Posting carriage. † Carriage. ‡ Curtain.

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about, that I applied for twenty-four hours' leave in order to fetch you, so we will go together in your *dak gharree* now at our door."

Only those who had gone through my ordeal of anxiety and apprehension can realise the delight of that journey to Delhi, which we reached at sunrise. By some means best known to themselves, our allies, the good little Goorkhas, had obtained a hint of our proceedings, and as we approached the gate all those in the neighbourhood turned out and gave us a rousing cheer. The Goorkhas always fraternised with the 60th, who they termed their *bhais* or brothers.

I found I was the first lady to enter the city after it had come into our hands. I arrived on October 17th, after having been immured in our lines at Meerut since May 10th.

The battalion was quartered in the Palace, a word that will give a false idea to those who do not know the East, and it was decided that we should there remain for the ensuing winter.

The late residence of the Timour family is enclosed within a wall three miles in extent, enormous in height, with bastions and fortified

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ASSAULT OF DELHI: CAPTURE OF THE CASHMERE GATE

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gates, embrasures and rows of loopholes. It is faced with slabs of red sandstone as if built of blocks, giving it a grand and massive appearance. Within this wall are the houses of the Emperor, mosques, halls of justice and of audience, gardens with numerous summer-houses, and the court-yards pertaining to his Majesty. Yet these form only a part of the whole, as there are barracks for the three regiments the King was allowed to keep, and dwellings for retainers of all degrees, from the establishments of princes of the blood to the huts of the coolies, making up a population of 10,000 persons. The rule of the Mogul had narrowed till this circle represented his dominions; but here he had reigned supreme, with the power, I believe, of life and death.

The principal gate, in grand proportions equalling any other in the world, faced the principal street of Delhi, called the Chandnee Chowk, or Silver Street, occupied by a large proportion of the jewellers of whom Delhi is justly proud.

When I entered, one of its massive portals hung a tottering ruin on a hinge, blown in by Colonel Sir John Jones when his column advanced



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to the capture, just four weeks before. The mouths of three great guns were pointed to the entrance, as when placed by the enemy for the reception of this column. A fine arcade, gaily painted, and lined on each side with shops, leads to an open square. The doors of the stalls were riddled with bullets, and instead of the *buniahs* * with their goods, they were filled with the flat, ugly faces of the little Goorkhas.

Two years before I had entered this arcade; then it was occupied by a crowd of the King's guard, and I was forbidden to proceed without the written order of Captain Douglas, who lived over the gate where the family in this fearful rebellion had been savagely murdered.

In the centre of the square the road goes by a tank, and in this was perpetrated one of the massacres that it will take years to forgive. The women and children who escaped death on May 11th and 12th were after many days' confinement butchered there in cold blood; and this deed was sanctioned by the King in his own territory.

* Shopkeepers.

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A paved road leads through an archway to a great gate on the right, facing another fine street, and on the left passes on to the Fort of Selimghur, lined by the dry bed of a canal which formerly supplied this fatal tank with water. The court was filled with guns, waggons, and army materials of all sorts, showing by dents and broken wheels marks of severe service. I saw the uniform of the Rifles on guard in a building we passed under, and then we entered a fine court, and faced a grand edifice called the Amm-Kass, or Hall of Justice, occupied by what the siege had left of the battalion. The way to the private courts of the King was through an arch on one side of the Amm-Kass, but we were driven to the other side where I could see no exit. On the top of the Justice Hall I noticed a strange structure, but it appeared stranger still when I was told it was my new abode.

I was wondering how this position could be reached when the *gharry* stopped, and I was led, by a passage broken through a house behind the Amm-Kass, to a flight of steps up to the top of a wall broad enough for a carriage drive. This



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singular road, elevated more than twenty feet, wound through the palace to houses, and around courtyards. A few paces to the left, another range of large stone steps led under the quaint structure to a handsome court with a marble fountain in the centre, carved elaborately, and inlaid with carnelian, bloodstone and agate. The golden letters of the inscription had been abstracted, some of the stones had been picked out, and the fountain was dry, as were all in this palace, which had once sparkled so brilliantly with flowing and with jetting water.

But the house most interested me, and I confess to a chill of despair when I turned to examine it. What had formerly been for the king a pretty summer residence, was now to me a cold wintry ruin, without windows, without doors, without even a floor. A shell had torn up the pavement, and the huge rent in the walls, considering the perilous elevation, aroused an unpleasant feeling of insecurity. A closer inspection, and a little time for thought, enabled me to see how the place could be made habitable. Below, two rooms were large and lofty, and smaller

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ones branched from them; above, a quaint one-room construction stood on the roof, with its little courtyard facing the river, while that below looked towards the city. Thus house rose on house to a pinnacle, the architect having apparently played with brick and mortar as children play with cards.

For some time I was superintending masons, painters, and carpenters, and restoring what appeared to be a century of neglect.

But the whole palace of the Moguls was a sad picture of dilapidation and dirt. Dirt overlaid everything, dimmed the brightness of paint, and sullied the purity of marble. Mud walls, erected without an apparent object, hid the choicest specimens of architectural beauty, and coats of white-wash covered blocks of sculptured stone. The first appearance raised a doubt if it were indeed the dwelling of Akbar, the residence of Shah Jehan. A more correct knowledge of this celebrated seat of government showed that debased descendants filled the place of refined ancestors. On the Dewan-Kass, or "Hall of Audience," are inscribed in gold the lines that now form so singular a

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contrast to the fact, and are thus translated by Moore in "Lalla Rookh":—

> "If there is a Paradise on earth,
> It is this, it is this."

From my house, if it still stands, the view is grand in extent, in beauty, and in interest. The palace, the city, the country lay as a map at our feet; and in every direction we looked through a clear atmosphere on a panorama I believe to be unequalled in India.

The giant walls of the palace rose in a battlemented circle around, and from this high post in its centre we gazed on its gardens, its squares, its streets, and all its varied buildings. The grey old Fort of Selimghur frowned on the Jumna, which, coursing close to the city wall, there divided, and sent a rapid and romantic-looking stream between the dark turrets of the ancient fort and the gay red walls of the palace. The water was spanned by two bridges—one hoary as Selimghur, the other light and elegant as the palace—a singular contrast between grey age and gay youth.

Far as I could see, the Jumna came winding

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down through the rich and level country, running close by, and away into the distance, where its glancing waters borrowed the azure of the sky, and the muddy current became in hue as ultramarine.

The palace hung over the water; its battlemented wall ceased where it reached the scarped bank which wound with the channel, rising from the water some twenty feet and faced with blocks of stone. The ground within the palace was level with the top, and it was on the crest of this scarp that the Moslem architect had lavished all his skill, and the result in its day must have been one of rare and tasteful beauty.

Buildings were massed together and piled on each other with quaint projections and curiously-carved windows jutting over the water, and among them, conspicuous in beauty, stood out the Dewan-Kass.

A seat of solid crystal like a block of massive ice was placed in a window, which from its delicate tracery seemed spun from marble—a fit spot for such a seat and not unworthy of him who styled himself "Ruler of the World."

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Next to this, the waters of the river reflected the trees of a garden, and among them were domes and minarets, mosques and summer-houses, difficult to describe—all of them small, but of exquisite material and finish. It was from the island where stands Selimghur that the scene broke with so singular a beauty on the sight; from my elevation the plan was clear, but the details were lost.

What strikes a stranger most forcibly is the way in which the Moslem artist had revelled in water. From a marble summer-house that looked along the crest of the scarp, a stream had flowed in a little cataract down an inlaid slab of this stone, still resting on its old incline, and, passing under the floor had been conducted in a marble canal into a series of buildings adjoining the Dewan-Kass, where it had filled marble fountains and had circled into marble baths. The canal was dry and almost choked with rubbish, and the visitor now entered rooms whose singular construction amazed him, and could only be accounted for by the fact that they had been erected to receive the falling showers of fountains.

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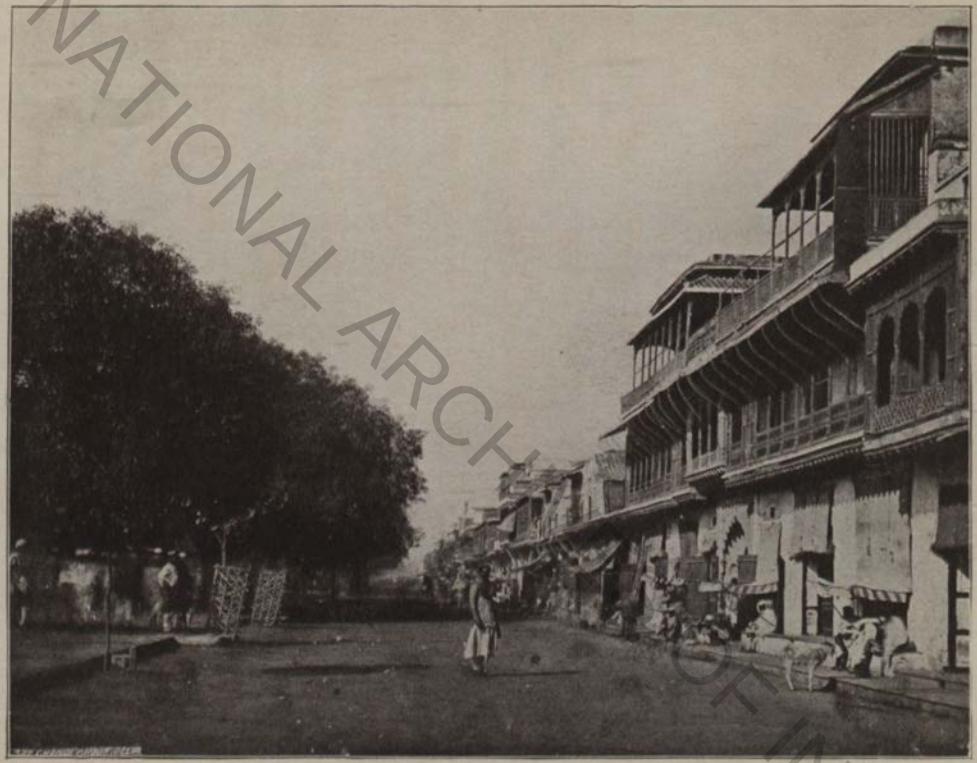

CHANDNI CHOWK, OR SILVER STREET: THE JEWELLERS' QUARTER IN DELHI

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A large square tank stood in the centre of the garden, and from the middle rose a curious structure of red stone, connected with the bank by a bridge that now passed over its dry bed, on which a boat lay rotting. Straight-paved walls and straight lines of trees gave a formal aspect to the grounds quite out of character with the style of the houses. Still, from above, the deep foliage hid these defects. The whole presented a scene more of neglect, almost amounting to barbarism, than of ruin, and with the water was gone the life and glory of the place.

Beyond the decaying seat of these degenerate kings, I looked over a city more beautiful far, when thus seen, than any other I had yet beheld. Its small size being enclosed within walls about seven miles in extent, placed it all before me. I could almost trace the line of fortifications, with its gates and bastions, in its entire circuit. The wide streets, the principal houses, not hidden in masses of green foliage, the mosques and the temples, marked distinctly the districts in which they were situated.

Straight before me the Chandnee Chowk, with

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its lines of trees, ran grandly up to the Lahore Gate, cutting the city in halves. To the left was a dense region of houses, where, from a slight elevation conspicuous in its huge proportions, rose the Jumma Musjid, its dome towering over all roofs, and its two minarets raising their elegant spires far above the dome. In all directions from this great Moslem temple the streets branched away like a spider's web.

The region on the right had been evidently the fashionable quarter, and its great houses peeped here and there from behind the leaves of numberless trees. I looked into the arsenal, over the wall so gallantly defended on May 11th, on the rows of cannon and piles of shot that remained, but the college beyond was concealed by the branching boughs. The church alone of all the buildings clearly showed its dome and held up above them its golden cross.

Far over the city the Flagstaff Tower, the Observatory and Hindoo Rao's—names so familiar to all in India—standing on the brow of a rocky height, were sharply defined against the blue sky.

That height is now enshrined in history.

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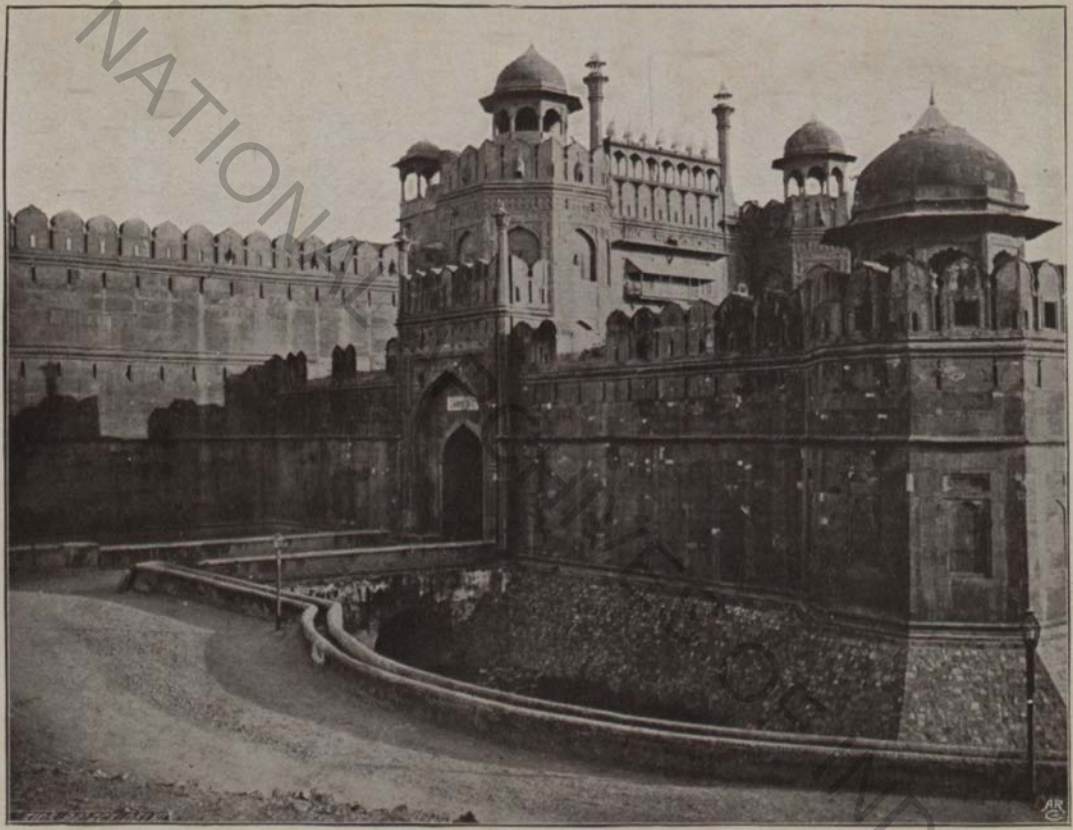

LAHORE GATE, DELHI

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Between it and this spot the great fight had been fought, every position had been contested, and every yard was over a grave. The whole way was strewn with the wreck left by the war—a wreck not visible from where I stood, for the scene, which had been beautifully laid out, looked as lovely now as it had done before that fatal May. The leaves were as green, the white road passed round the tower as if uninjured by a shell, and the ruin of Hindoo Rao's only added to the picturesque effect.

I did not know, as I gazed, that scarcely a human being was left in the silent city at my feet. All I yet knew of war was confined to the losses of our own people by battle and exposure, and I was ignorant of the awful destruction that had overtaken the inhabitants. It had not occurred to me that there were sufferers greater than ourselves with whom I ought to sympathize.

In the building beneath me, where the Mogul Emperors had administered justice, were lodged the third, left after the perils of the siege, of that noble battalion which had marched on May 25th from Meerut. The room, supported on

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a forest of pillars, was gigantic in size. The emperor ascended from a private staircase at the back, and entering a raised daïs of beautiful marble exquisitely carved, seated himself on that great throne which became the prey of Nadir Shah, and whose noblest gem now sparkles among the jewels of our Queen. This was the celebrated Peacock Throne, and that diamond the Koh-i-noor.

Here it was the emperors held their public durbars, met ambassadors and administered justice; but the private audience was in the Dewan-Kass, rising, as I have said, from the scarped bank of the river, and looking down on the Jumna. In that Hall the last emperor was tried by a commission of British officers, where not many years before he had considered himself disgraced and a stain cast on his escutcheon, because a Governor-General, and one of England's highest nobles, had sat down in his presence.

Shortly after my arrival I drove over the field of the recent struggles. The advanced batteries had not yet been removed, though coolies were beginning the work. The country was pretty

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between the walls and the hills, circling together for more than a mile, and maintaining an average breadth of about the same distance, the space between tastefully laid out and intersected by roads which here and there were rough with the boulders that had rolled from the rocky height and overgrown with a tangled vegetation. The air was fresh and exhilarating and all looked bright on this autumn morning. The road passed close by the round Flagstaff Tower which I had looked on with interest from my elevated residence. The women and children assembled there when the mutineers from Meerut and the Delhi brigade joined them in open rebellion.

Behind the circling hill was the ruined cantonment, and the long lines could still be traced where the tents of the British force had stood. A good road runs along the crest of the hill, and, passing the Observatory, we drove by it to a ruin of great interest. This was the solid and handsome house of Hindoo Rao, a wealthy native gentleman, who had given his name to the principal post of the besieging army, and the scene of innumerable combats. The entire front had been battered to

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pieces, and it was owing to the solidity of the structure that any portion of it still stood. The rooms so long occupied by the gallant little Goorkhas were pointed out to me, and a small apartment behind, where a shot from Kissengunje had burst, killing or dreadfully wounding nearly every man in the room. But Hindoo Rao's had been the scene of so many tragedies, the death-place of so many brave soldiers, that this shot is only remarkable for the wholesale nature of the destruction it effected. The ground was torn up by the projectiles and shot, and pieces of shell lay thickly strewn around.

Looking down on the city the eye rested on the Morree Bastion, the destroyer of Hindoo Rao's, now itself a heap of ruins; and half-way between, as it appeared to me, a swarm of coolies were at work demolishing the battery that had smashed the bastion into an undistinguishable mass.

The long line of wall between the Lahore and the Cashmere gates seemed little injured, but as the wall neared the Cashmere Gate the effects of the fire were more apparent.

The singular beauty of Delhi was seen to even

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greater advantage from Hindoo Rao's than from the structure at the top of the Amm Kass. It combined the grace of Moslem architecture with the charm of English finish. Through trees and bungalows wound smooth macadamized roads; beyond were the fortifications. Still farther away rose domes and minarets, and behind all were the dark red walls of the palace. From green trees peeped the roofs of houses, and these were broken by spires and pagodas; and I feel sure that, even during the worst period of peril and anxiety, many who looked from that height with the fierce determination utterly to destroy the city must have acknowledged in their hearts that its beauty was beyond that of any other they had seen.

The hill from Hindoo Rao's slopes down to the Subsi-Mundi, and I passed on the way two or three batteries, such as the "Crow's Nest," a name with which I was familiar. At the base of the hill ran the high road between Delhi and Umballa, and beyond was the suburb of Kissengunje, held by the enemy in great force during the siege, and where the fourth column had been

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compelled to retire after sustaining terrible loss.

The Subsi-Mundi is a large square serai, and was the point on the extreme right of the British position. The operations of the force were conducted between it and the river Jumna; but the enemy had a battery on the right enfilading the height, and a battery on the left throwing its shot across the river. Thus the besiegers were themselves besieged, and the beleaguered city had by far a wider scope of communication than the beleaguering force.

On our return we passed the handsome house of Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, now a sad picture of wanton destruction. Between it and the Cashmere Gate this cruel war had everywhere left its mark; cannon-balls had splintered walls and cut trees to pieces; shells had dug holes in the road, and every log of timber was penetrated by a stray bullet. The houses were in ruins, but the ruin in the country was mere play when contrasted with that in the town.

The fortifications were shattered, the gates lay on the ground, the bridge across the moat

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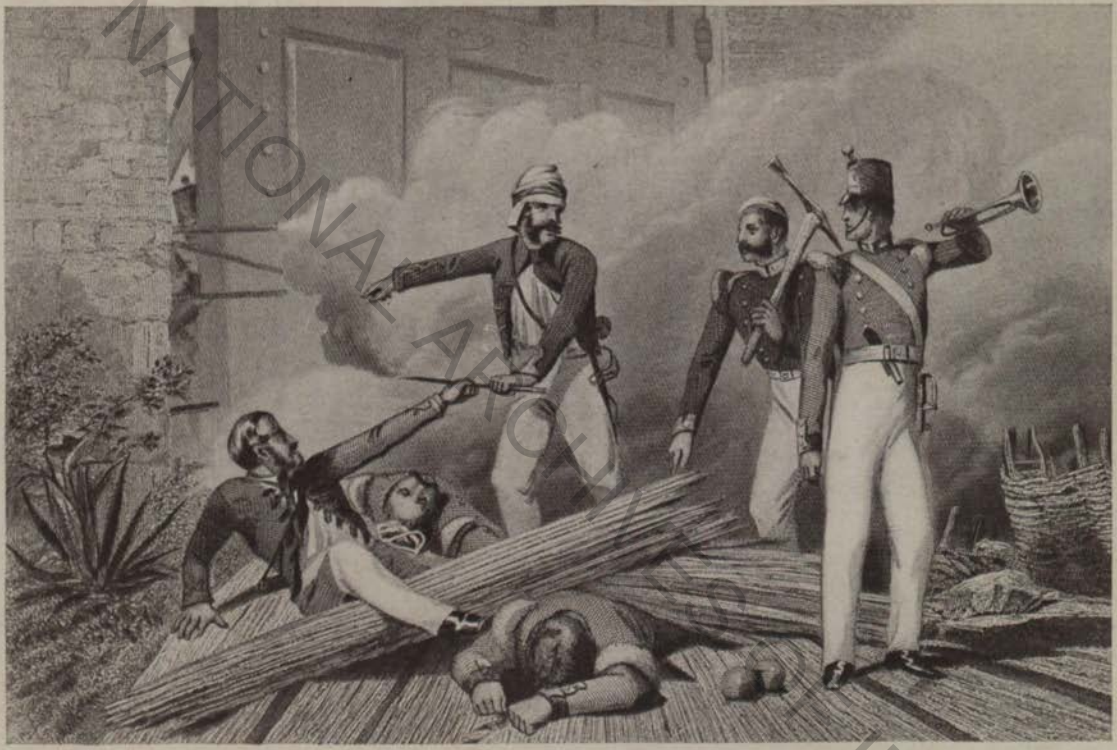

BLOWING-UP OF THE CASHMERE GATE AT DELHI

While endeavouring to fire the charge, Lieut. Salkeld was shot through the arm and leg, and handed over the slow match to Corporal Burgess, who fell mortally wounded just as he had accomplished the onerous duty

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bore heavy traces of the strife, and the neighbourhood showed how large a portion of the fire had been concentrated on the Cashmere Gate.

This gate was the scene of some striking incidents of the Mutiny. By it the troops advanced from the cantonment to meet the mutineers from Meerut. There the officers first became convinced how little the Sepoys they had led were to be relied on; many escaped over the adjacent walls, and above it a British magistrate is said to have been hanged. There gallantly had died most of the party who had blown in the gate, and up that incline had rushed the assaulting column.

Where I stood had first rung the cheers of the British army on the day the fate of India was placed in their hands. It is singular to relate that on this spot, not long after, a starving multitude of Natives—when the country groaned under a famine—were fed by British hands from the proceeds of British charity; a noble sequel to the sad story, and one, I trust, that may be remembered to England's honour, if the acts of her sons during this dreadful period were



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not always tempered with justice and with mercy.

The first building of importance within the gates—the Protestant church—had not escaped a tremendous battering, though the chaplain declared that the cross that surmounted the dome was uninjured. The *Delhi Gazette* press, the college for native students, the house of Khan Mahommed Khan and of Colonel Skinner were either totally destroyed or much damaged, and the walls and the ground were pitted with the marks of bullets and of shell.

Farther on we passed the magazine Lieutenant Willoughby so gallantly attempted to destroy. Up a street to the right, bearing marks of the severe struggle, we entered a garden, with the remains of a splendid house standing in the centre. When the Mutiny began it was occupied by the Delhi Bank, and became the tomb of the manager and of all his family. The murderers had rioted there in plunder and in destruction, and on it Brigadier Campbell had fallen back, after his brilliant advance to the walls of the Jumma Musjid. It had been strongly fortified,

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and was still covered by sandbags, as it had been held during the period of the street fighting from September 14th to the occupation of the palace.

A short street led into the Chandnee Chowk, a more melancholy picture still, than any I had yet seen. When last I looked on this fine street, not many months before, it presented a gay and joyous sight; broad as it is, it was scarcely broad enough for the throng that filled it. Elephants and camels, horses and carriages, decked with the finery of the East, crowded the way; now it was silent and empty. The contents of the shops lay strewn in the street, or huddled in a confused mass on the floors. The sneaking figure of some prowling thief, a lean, half-famished dog, or one of the many cats—the sole inhabitants of Delhi—were all that moved. The painful effect of this solitude was more depressing than even the ruin. Where were the people of Delhi? The tender children, the delicate women, the old and infirm, all were gone, swept away by the fatal crimes of others!

Those who know war, not from books, but from experience of its realities, shrink from it



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with horror; and a war like this, without quarter and without mercy is the worst affliction that can overtake a land. No city desolated by a plague ever wore the appearance of Delhi at that time, or became the solitude it then was.

Before many months elapsed nearly every great city in the immense Central Provinces of India was stormed or occupied by our army; and the loss of life, the destruction of property, the cruel sufferings, will never be known to the world unless a second Macaulay wholly devotes himself to the task.

Right in the centre of the Chandnee Chowk a hideous erection of wood was the only new and uninjured structure—and this was the gallows. Hundreds perished on that platform, and among the number were rajahs and nawabs who had themselves and their fathers before them ruled in the territory around. I trust that no innocent men died there, victims to the fierce hatred the massacres had excited.

A war like this, however, acts with the fellest injustice, and were the number of blameless persons who were sacrificed truly estimated, the

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British public would be horrified at the result. When Colonel Muter was visiting the advanced posts on the capture of Bareilly he was asked by the officer in command what was to be done with some women who had been taken out of a well. The officer led him into a small enclosure where stretched on the ground lay the dead bodies of six or seven girls who evidently belonged to the upper classes. Beside them were five or six others slowly recovering, and an old woman rocking herself on her knees and pouring out her sorrows in prayer. The officer pointed to a narrow well, down the black depths of which my husband looked, but he could see no bottom. These women had precipitated themselves into this hole, springing down one after another, amid the crash of shell and storm of shot preceding the advance of the troops to the capture of the city.

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## CHAPTER VII.

When the workmen had finished, we were in possession of a good sitting-room, dining-room and bedroom, with a dressing-room at either end. The building was too much exposed for comfort in the season now approaching. It was not till the end of November that I really knew what the cold of a Delhi winter morning was. The wind howled through every crevice, and whirled the dust in eddies around the outer court. At night it whistled loudly around the corners of my singular house, and piles of blankets failed to keep me warm. In the day, I heaped up logs on the low-lying fire, and this threw out a strong heat. The climate during the winter is fine, dry, clear, cold, and invigorating. People unacquainted with India picture to themselves the country for the whole year under a tropical sun, but they have little idea either of the fierceness of the heat in summer, or of the cold of the blasts of winter in the North-west Provinces.

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The supplies were abundant, and we experienced no difficulty from the commencement of the war in procuring all we required. English stores, of course, rose enormously; but everything grown in the country remained cheap and plentiful. A fowl could be purchased for a shilling, a dozen eggs one shilling and threepence, mutton and beef about sixpence per pound. Vegetables and fish were cheaper still; while hares, snipe, and wildfowl were abundant in the market. The Chandnee Chowk began to reassume some appearance of life, and while the rest of Delhi was a wilderness, shops and stalls were open there to supply the Force quartered in the city.

No English mail had yet reached us, though news came by indirect sources, and we were gratified to learn how deep was the interest excited throughout the civilised world by the ardent struggle of the English in India. England had hastened to our rescue—the sea was covered with steamers full of troops. Batteries of Artillery and squadrons of Cavalry were pouring in by the overland route, and Sir Colin Campbell had assumed the Command-in-Chief. From other

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parts came the intelligence of the advance of Havelock, the relief of Lucknow, and the victories of Sir Hugh Rose; and we looked hopefully for the time when this devastating war would cease.

The ignorance and folly of the men who had originated the Mutiny became more strikingly displayed as it progressed to its close. The Gwalior Contingent, which had hung like a threatening cloud over the Delhi Field Force, and which for such a period could have decided by a move the fate of the siege, and consequently of India, marched, when Delhi had fallen, and Lucknow had been relieved, and we heard of the fierce battle they had fought at Cawnpore, and afterwards of their total defeat by the Commander-in-Chief. It was by such acts of folly on the part of our enemy that we were saved in the great crisis. This war was begun by the Sepoys in treachery, ingratitude and cruelty; was continued in ignorance and incapacity, without energy and without courage; and ended, without bringing to the surface one redeeming trait, or one man fit to rule.

The work carried on with most interest was the search for prize. Agents had been elected

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before the capture, and were diligently employed in gathering the booty, but the greater portion was lost through ignorance of its whereabouts.

They commenced by seizing the horses, carriages, and furniture—things that could not be concealed. The troops had entered the city calculating the booty at millions of rupees, but where these rupees were no one save the Natives had an idea. The knowledge dawned on us when the greater part had been abstracted by those better informed. The badmashes knew the rich houses and where the coin was likely to be concealed, and they worked diligently in the dead of night. The prize agents employed a number of officers in the search. For a short period it became a most exciting pursuit, and my husband was actively and successfully engaged. After an early breakfast, he would start, with a troop of coolies, armed with picks, crowbars, and measuring lines. A house said to contain treasure would be allotted for the day's proceedings, and the business would commence by a careful survey of the premises. The houses enclosed a large extent of ground, generally containing two or three courts.

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The rooms faced on the courts, which were usually planted with grass, and shaded with shrubs. The houses seldom rose above one storey, with flat roofs, and staircases leading up to them, greatly facilitating the survey. By a careful measurement of the roofs above and of the rooms below, any concealed space could be detected. Then the walls were broken through, and if there was a secret room or a built-up niche or recess, it would be discovered, and some large prizes rewarded their search.

On one occasion I had asked a few friends to lunch, expecting Colonel Muter home, when a guest informed me there was no chance of his return as a large treasure he could not leave had been found. It was late when he came back with thirteen waggons loaded with spoil, and, among other valuables, eighty thousand rupees; in English money eight thousand pounds. On another occasion, after thoroughly ransacking a house and obtaining silver vessels and gold ornaments, before the party withdrew a coolie was directed to drive his pick into the grass of the court, and the first stroke went through a bag of a

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thousand rupees. Planted side by side in a neat border, under the earth, these bags were laid around the enclosure, but the canvas was so rotten and the night so dark that the work could not be finished, and it was not possible, without sleeping over the treasure, to preserve it to the agency. Hours would be lost in detecting and digging from the chunammed floors ponderous iron boxes to find them empty; but the keenest disappointment arose from the way the city was plundered by those not working for the army. Days were spent in ascertaining where a treasure had been hid, only to learn that the prize was gone, most probably to some of the ruffians who had aided in the plunder of the cantonment, and who had imbrued their hands in the blood of the victims of Delhi. We heard rumours from time to time that some of the searchers among those no one would have suspected of the crime, had "annexed" to themselves articles of value, forgetful that all secured was expected to form a fund out of which the wounded, those invalided or in hospital from illness contracted in the campaign, were intended honourably to share. In fact, in a recent work I

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was shocked to read that an officer openly confessed that "human nature" could not resist the temptation to appropriate valuable jewelry. All such would have done well to look up the Book of Joshua, seventh chapter, and read how loot was and is regarded by the All-seeing Eye. It did not save Achan to confess (verse 21): "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and behold they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." The punishment accorded would in these days be considered terribly severe in proportion to the offence, inasmuch as it fell on all the family and possessions of Achan; but who are we to express our judgment? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

The tent where the more valuable articles were displayed was pitched on the flat roof of a house overlooking the court of the Dewan-Kass. There were several iron strong boxes among a miscellaneous collection, bearing traces of having been buried; and on chairs, sofas, and tables

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were shawls, silks, kincobs, swords, daggers, fans, and fowling-pieces. A prize agent opened one of the iron chests, and I saw pearls, emeralds, rings, and jewelry of every kind. Glass was mixed with precious stones of great worth, and pearls that required a practised eye to detect they were false. A friend wrote to me from Meerut to ask if I could get her into the prize tent, as she wished to buy some pearls. I answered, "Certainly"—and she came. We went together to the prize tent, and I introduced her as requiring some fine pearls. Some were shown her which she said were, to all appearance, what she wished, but she could not buy without testing. "What I will do will not injure them if sound; but, if false, they will be destroyed. I have brought a needle with me which I would insert into the hole drilled through the pearl and try to work it about. If the pearl is genuine no harm will result, but, if false, if will be destroyed." Permission granted, my friend inserted her needle, and as she worked it these fine pearls proved to be clever imitations in wax with a fine glaze over.

Often there was something paltry in the

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richest ornament. In a crown of pure gold, found by my husband in the palace of the Empress, there were drops of green glass to represent emeralds. Silver vessels were sold for their weight in rupees, and at this rate an officer of the Carabiniers purchased a massive tea-pot of spurious metal under the impression that it was silver. The native jewelry was pure in metal, but uncouth in form; diamonds and emeralds large but flat; and although they excel at Delhi in filigree work, and can copy English patterns, yet the setting of these jewels was generally very coarse.

I was much interested in a collection of miniatures and portraits of Europeans found during the search. Many had belonged to the murdered, and the agents wished them to be recognised and returned to those who valued them. There were Bibles and Prayer-books, with the names of ladies who had perished on the fly-leaf. And neither the palace of the King nor the house of the Queen was exempt from these relics, which so strongly condemned them.

The Great Mogul was now our prisoner and

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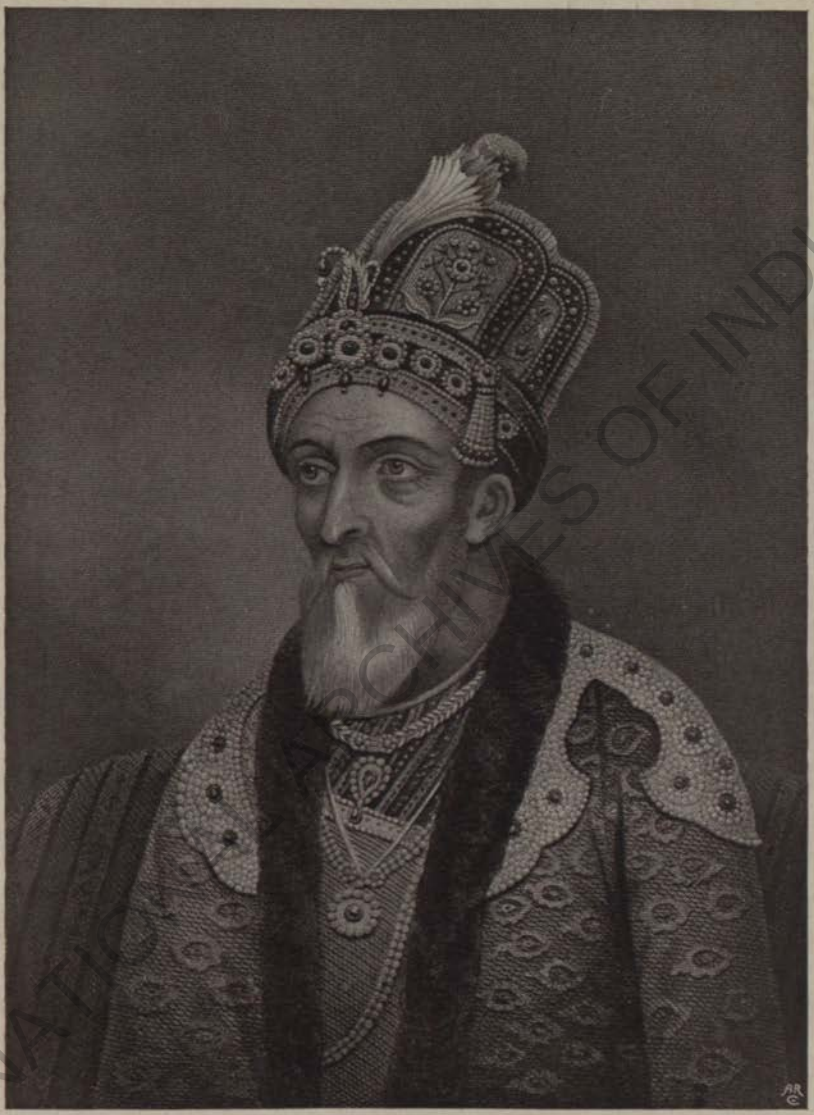

MAHOMED SURAJ-OO-DEEN SHAH GAZEE

TITULAR KING OF DELHI

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lodged in a small house within the palace. Shortly after Delhi fell the royal family had been captured and brought in by Major Hodson. He had shot on the spot two of the King's sons and a grandson. The eldest of these princes was a fine young man, the grandson a mere stripling; but if half the stories told of this boy were true, he was one of the most depraved monsters nursed by the Mutiny.

Enough was elicited on the King's trial to show how dissipated and reckless these young men had been. Instead of leading in the field the revolted regiments that had proclaimed their father emperor, they headed the Mutiny only in its murders and in its outrages. The petitions of the people for protection, and the records of the siege kept by the natives, prove that though they shrank from no unlawful act, they recoiled with fear and trembling from meeting our army in battle. The bodies of these ill-fated young men were carried to Delhi, and exposed in the Chandnee Chowk.

It was remarkable how fatal this Mutiny was to all who took a leading part in it—to us as well

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as to the enemy. Nearly every native prince or noble who led in the war against us either fell in battle, or perished by the hand of the executioner, and the number of our own leaders who were killed in the field, or sank under the fatigues of the campaign, has been a subject of deep grief to the nation. The sentence on the King was banishment for life to Burmah. He was permitted to take Zenud Mahal with him and five sons.

A Commission was sitting for the trial of native prisoners of rank, and the Nawab of Jugghur and the Rajah of Bolubghur had already perished by its sentence. The estates of these gentlemen lay on the Agra side of Delhi, in a district wholly in the hands of the rebels. The choice between the English who might again come into power, and the mutineers who were in power, was one of great difficulty to natives acting without fixed principles, and inclining to that side they expected to be most to their advantage. For months the scales had been evenly balanced; the prestige of empire was with us, but the belief throughout the land was that our sway had ended. With them the essence of politics

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is to temporize, and they had no true conception of the character of their rulers.

From their infancy they had been accustomed to the mild government of England, and they looked at the worst for interminable law proceedings. Acting on this conviction, at the same time that they furnished the King of Delhi with the sinews of war, they endeavoured to keep up a communication with the English General. Unfortunately for them, when the King deserted his palace, he left evidence strewed about sufficient to convict them—papers that told a strange tale. That such proof against his supporters, which he had ample time to destroy, should have been left open and exposed was a remarkable act. Similar instances occurred during the war, and furnish another of the unaccountable proceedings of this unaccountable people.

The Nawab was in Delhi when the mutineers entered from Meerut, and he was much blamed for not aiding our people with his numerous followers. He replied to this with startling justice "that it was England who had armed and trained the ruffians who had brought the calamity on



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the land; and it was not fair to expect him to compel that obedience in his followers which the rulers of the country and his judges had failed in compelling among their own."

This Prince met his fate on the gallows with a calmness, a fortitude, and gentlemanly bearing that inspired my husband, who commanded the escort, with the deepest respect.

More melancholy still was the death of the Rajah, whose sympathies as a Hindoo were probably as much with the English as with the Moslem Emperor. Gentle in manner, young and handsome in person, it was the hard fate of this noble to be placed in circumstances wherein every path was fraught with peril and to be tried when death was the award of any act hostile to our rule. There was something touching in the last words he spoke before his judges: "I was securely seated on a goodly bough of a flourishing tree, and my own act has sawn asunder the branch on which I rested."

The King's turn had come to appear before this fatal tribunal, and all were anxious to see how the old man would deport himself on the

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trying occasion. The Commission sat in the Dewan-Kass—that private hall of reception sacred to him, and which the etiquette of the Court for centuries had forbidden any to enter except by command. Not often even in history has such an instance of the vanity of human power been seen as when this representative of one of the greatest houses was arraigned for high crimes before a few British officers—not one of whom held the substantive commission of Lieutenant-Colonel.

As he was borne through the arch of the inner court, the unhappy Sovereign might have observed two cleverly executed outlines in chalk on the wall of the recess, which in the days of his prosperity the guard nearest his person had occupied. Both were so strikingly like his sharp aquiline face and attenuated form that the words written beneath were unnecessary to convey to any one who had seen him the meaning of the drawings: "The King of Delhi as he is," was under the first; the others represented him hanging from a gibbet, and beneath it was written: "The King of Delhi as he ought to be."



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I was present at the proceedings, which were opened by an able and eloquent address from the Judge-Advocate-General, in which he spoke to the charges against the King. The trial was one of investigation, and the Court would come to a finding, but had no power to pass sentence. They would record evidence, now the opportunity offered, that would eventually be of great historical interest, besides determining how far the King was really culpable.

Then the fallen monarch appeared under an escort of Riflemen, and his palanquin was carried into the hall. He was accompanied by Jumma Buckt, the child of his old age and of his wife Zenud Mahal, now almost the only survivor that remained to him of his family. Before him sat the Commission by whose stern sentence so many of that family had already perished, and the guards around him wore the uniform of the soldiers beneath whose bullets they had fallen. The feeble old man rested on a pile of cushions on the floor. He was short in stature, and of a slight, infirm figure; his face was handsomely cut, the nose prominent and aquiline, the features intelli-

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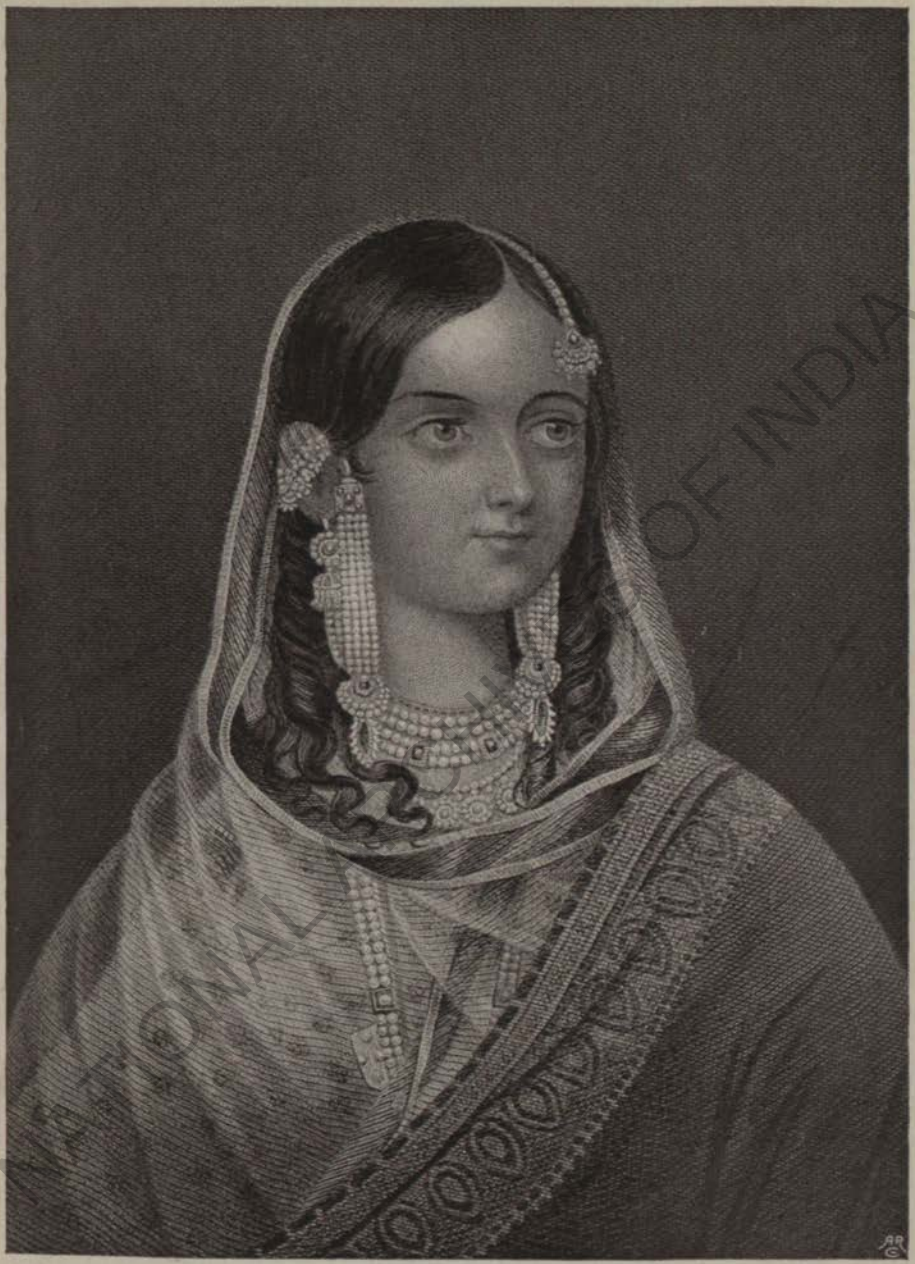

ZENAT MAHAL-BEGUM, OR QUEEN OF DELHI

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gent, and with an air of refinement that did not disgrace his high descent. The trial had been postponed from week to week by his illness, and was now delayed by frequent adjournments to give him time for repose. At first he appeared alarmed, and his face wore an anxious expression; but by degrees it became more vacant, and he assumed or felt indifference, remaining apparently in a state of lethargy, with his eyes closed during the greater part of the proceedings.

One of the chief questions was, whether the King had sanctioned the murder of the Christians who had escaped the first massacres; and I believe the Commission found that his order for the execution had been obtained. It appeared from what I gathered that he had condemned the conduct of the Nana at Cawnpore; and there was abundant proof that he had striven hard to protect the citizens of Delhi from the violence of the soldiery and the outrages of the nobles, and the people in the country from the plundering Goojurs.

It was clear how wretched the old man had been when eddied about in the whirlwind of the

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Mutiny with no energy to control, and no force of will to rule the cruel natures around. Numerous petitions from the people were translated, with the King's remarks. Much of what he said was sound and good, but his complaints were bitter of the insolence of the Sepoys, who had so cringed to us. How keenly he felt the thorns in the bed which had been prepared for him! He was a mere puppet who had drifted down a stream and suddenly found itself the most prominent object in a vast sea of trouble.

I cannot think that in the treatment of the last of the house of Timour our country showed her usual liberality. We must keep the fact ever before us, that it was our army that set the country in a blaze—that it was our timidity that led to the great catastrophe; and we have not even the excuse that the Mutiny was an unforeseen event.

Some weeks before the outbreak my husband repeated a conversation he had held with Mr. Hodson, afterwards the celebrated leader of "Hodson's Horse," who said:—"Some years ago I was at a public dinner given to a Governor-

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General of India. In drinking his health an allusion was made to the campaign on the Sutlej, and in reply he observed; 'Trust me, gentlemen, your greatest war is to come, and that will be with your own Native army.' Mr. Hodson added: 'I was even then impressed with the truth of this remark, and I now believe the predicted war is drawing near.'"

A few months only elapsed when that good soldier himself fell in the conflict he had foreseen.

Amid all the poverty and contempt thrown on the King, I was gratified to observe the demeanour of many of the witnesses when called to give evidence. Bowing to the ground with hands clasped, before the miserable figure on the bed, addressed by them as "Ruler of the Universe," though by the Committee as *tum*,* they observed to the powerless old man a degree of respect denied to the Court, who had only to nod the signal for their execution. The demeanour of young Jumma Buckt, on the trial of his father, was an exhibition of bad taste, and in striking

* Pronounced "toom": a mode of address only used to inferiors and servants.

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contrast to that of the old servant who attended the King.

The residence of the Empress in the days of her prosperity was situated in the city, at some distance from the Palace. The house is a fair specimen of the dwellings of the grandees in Delhi, and one day I accompanied my husband to inspect the mansion. Part of the building stood on the street, three storeys high. I passed under an archway by outhouses into a passage leading into an oblong court with buildings facing me around. A canal ran through the centre of the court, with the usual fountains, and the ground was laid out as a garden.

The buildings were one-storeyed, with a flat roof; a row of rooms opened to the court, and another row was behind them. The apartments of the Queen were at the ends of the parallelogram, tastefully decorated. A large portion of the prize had been taken in this house, and in the search the agents had turned it upside down. Broken china strewed the floors, torn drapery and articles of little value covered the court, piles of earth showed where holes had been dug, and walls with

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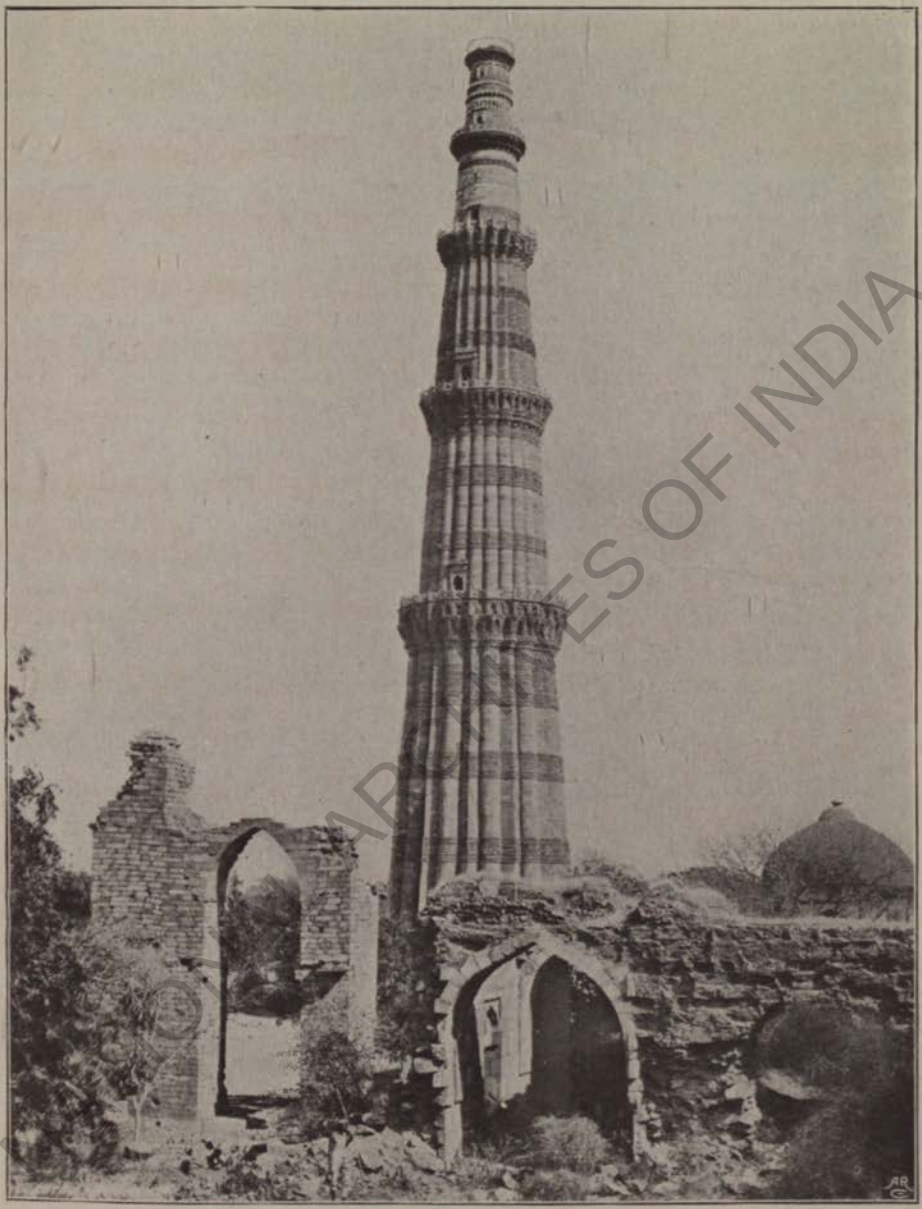

THE KOOTUB MINAR ON RUINS OF OLD DELHI

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great openings dashed through them proved that no difficulties had stood in the way. By a side door I went into a smaller court, and from that into another, no two of them alike. Then I came to a range of outhouses and of stabling. The extent was considerable, though the accommodation was not great.

The Jumma Musjid holds the same rank in India that St. Peter's does in the Roman Catholic world. Like St. Paul's, it stands in the heart of the city on slightly rising ground. The plateau from which the walls arise is a stupendous structure, and the steps and gateway are worthy of the plateau. When there, the visitor is in a vast open court, paved with blocks of sandstone—the material of the building, excepting the domes and minarets, which are composed of marble. From one of the tall spires he looks over the country as from an aeroplane, and like a novice at the masthead he wonders how the slight column can bear him aloft. The old ruins around Delhi away to the Kootub, eleven miles off, are visible from this spot.

Delhi was a great city before the Moslem set

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his foot in Hindostan, and for ages it has swayed backwards and forwards on the banks of the Jumna within range of this view. Upon a rocky soil, plentifully supplied with stone, many traces must remain of so ancient a city; and ruins are everywhere to be found, of which the most remarkable is the Kootub. This exquisite tower, like the Taj at Agra, is the most perfect work of its kind; but the tower is so old, and its history so obscure, that it loses much of the interest attaching to the mausoleum. The summit of that tower, from which I also gazed, has its own story of the Mutiny; for some of the retreating Sepoys, who there sought refuge, were hurled from the top.

With the first of the year, officers began to arrive from England, and again communication was opened along the great military road. As yet, however, it was only the Doab that was cleared of the mutineers, for all the country on the left bank of the Ganges was in arms, and there was little but rebellion on the right bank of the Jumna.

The battalion received its orders to march to Meerut on February 1st, 1858. The bundles of

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our servants had greatly increased, and their demand for carriage was now on a most extravagant scale. The bearer (Colonel Muter's personal attendant) had been of great service during the Mutiny, but of late had been found impossible to move; he had taken up his residence in a room at the foot of our entrance steps, and he feared to leave the spot, where he kept watch over his plunder. The cares of riches were now embarrassing him, and the robber dreaded being robbed. Having a wholesome fear of the prize agents, he did not appear in kincobs and satins till after his return to Meerut; but then—he turned out in princely costume. Grandeur such as his could not be expected to work, so he passed away like a comet, and I bethought me of the old saying, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good."

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# Part III

# HOT WEATHER CAMPAIGN IN ROHILCUND

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE road from the palace was lined with the gallant little Goorkhas as the Rifles passed out on their return to Meerut, and the chilly air rang with the cheers of their old companions in arms.

At this time rest was unknown in India, the country being in commotion with moving columns —and the war, hitherto local, was more general throughout the land. It is seldom that so wide a field of operations has been seen, and it was necessary to make up by constant movement for the want of numbers, though a stream of troops had been poured into Hindostan by both the sea and overland routes.

We had scarcely settled in our old house before a wing of the 60th joined a force under General Penny in the march to Kassgunje and my husband left Meerut in command of the Rifles, when I was once more alone. But life in the cantonment was now greatly changed from the days when he had

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gone to the Siege of Delhi. Scarcely a trace remained of the fortifications, and though gloom still hung over the bazaars, the roads were again gay with carriages, and the station had returned to its pristine ways.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, for those who live at home at ease fully to realise the relief a feeling of security brings. Every day blessings are the greatest though least appreciated till lost, and there are many the full value of which can never be known in Great Britain, for I believe our country to be so constituted that they can never be lost. During the weary months I had passed in Meerut how ardently I longed to enjoy an existence free from this weight of danger, this depressing, never-ceasing apprehension of a dreadful fate felt during the day and during the night, asleep and awake; a sword suspended over the head, embittering every enjoyment of life. Often my imagination carried me far from this distracted land and pictured the happiness of an English fireside, of home and safety.

Although this absolute security was denied, still I contrasted with thankfulness the compara-

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tive freedom from danger both of the English in these Provinces, and of the service in which the troops were engaged. Before, under a scorching sun, the men, isolated, far in Asia among hosts of enemies, had gone forth to a task of desperation; now the rebellion had been met, checked, rolled back, and the voice of encouragement, of sympathy and of assistance, came with an earnest sound from our country, and met an eager welcome.

In the interval of my husband's absence, the joyous news reached me that he was named for the command of one of the Convalescent Depots on the Himalayah Mountains; but the appointment was not to be taken up until the service required from the battalion had been completed. It soon appeared that the Commander-in-Chief had views for the 60th incompatible with the detachment of the wing under General Penny. That wing was directed to march on Roorkee, the great Engineer station, where a strong force had been for some time assembling. Then the Commander-in-Chief's plan was made known to our Colonel, who was ordered to march the remainder of the battalion to Roorkee and assume command



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of the column now designated "The Roorkee Field Force." At the same time he was gazetted a Brigadier-General, and desired to select a staff, when he named my husband his D.A. Adjutant-General.

The proceedings of this force will afford my readers more interest than a detail of the stupid life I led at Meerut; and I therefore give a general idea of the campaign that followed, gained from letters, telegrams, and despatches.

The Roorkee Field Force crossed the Ganges and entered Rohilcund below the pilgrim city of Hurdwan, where the clear stream debouches from the hills, and hurries over a stony bed into the alluvial soil of the plains.

Along the foot of the Himalayah runs a belt of forest land inundated in the rainy season, and always covered with a tropical vegetation—a region of fever and a den of wild beasts. In droves the towering elephant crushes down the underwood, the crouching tiger hides in the thickest lairs, and the screech of the hyena and the howls of wolves and of jackals are heard without cessation through the night. In so fit

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a region were enacted some of the tragedies of these terrible times. The advancing footsteps of the British army pressed back the Native troops into the wilderness, and the Nana, with many of the leaders and a crowd of followers, is said to have perished there from the deadly effect of the climate.

From Hurdwan the Ganges takes a wide bend, enclosing between its waters and the ranges of the Himalayah the country forming the provinces of Rohilcund and of Oude. This tract is, perhaps, the fairest in India. The great mountains that rear their icy crests along its length roll many streams through its plains to the sacred river—plains level as a bowling green and fertile as those of Lombardy. With the exception of the belt I have described it is well cultivated, and covered with goodly cities.

Such were the newly acquired kingdom of Oude and our old province of Rohilcund, where the Mutiny erected its strongholds, and whence it drew its chief strength.

When the Doab had been cleared, and the right bank of the Ganges was in our hands, Sir



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Colin Campbell (afterwards Lord Clyde) placed a cordon from the hills at Hurdwan to the territory of Nepaul, and having fixed his nets, he drew in his prey. The rebels had the option of retiring into the belt I have described, called the Terai, or of breaking through his lines; but neither course held out much hope of escape. It was in reality death from disease, or death by the sword that was offered.

The columns were put simultaneously into motion, and although acting many hundreds of miles apart, the movements were so directed that they converged together on the city of Bareilly about the central spot.

General Jones's force was, therefore, not an independent column, but a portion of an army acting on the enemy's flank, and one skilfully handled by his Excellency, and ably directed by its commander. It was required to sweep the land from the point where the river cuts through the Terai, while General Penny held a post in the centre, and Sir Colin, in command of a splendid force, advanced from the south-east. The fords of the Ganges were well guarded. As the Roorkee

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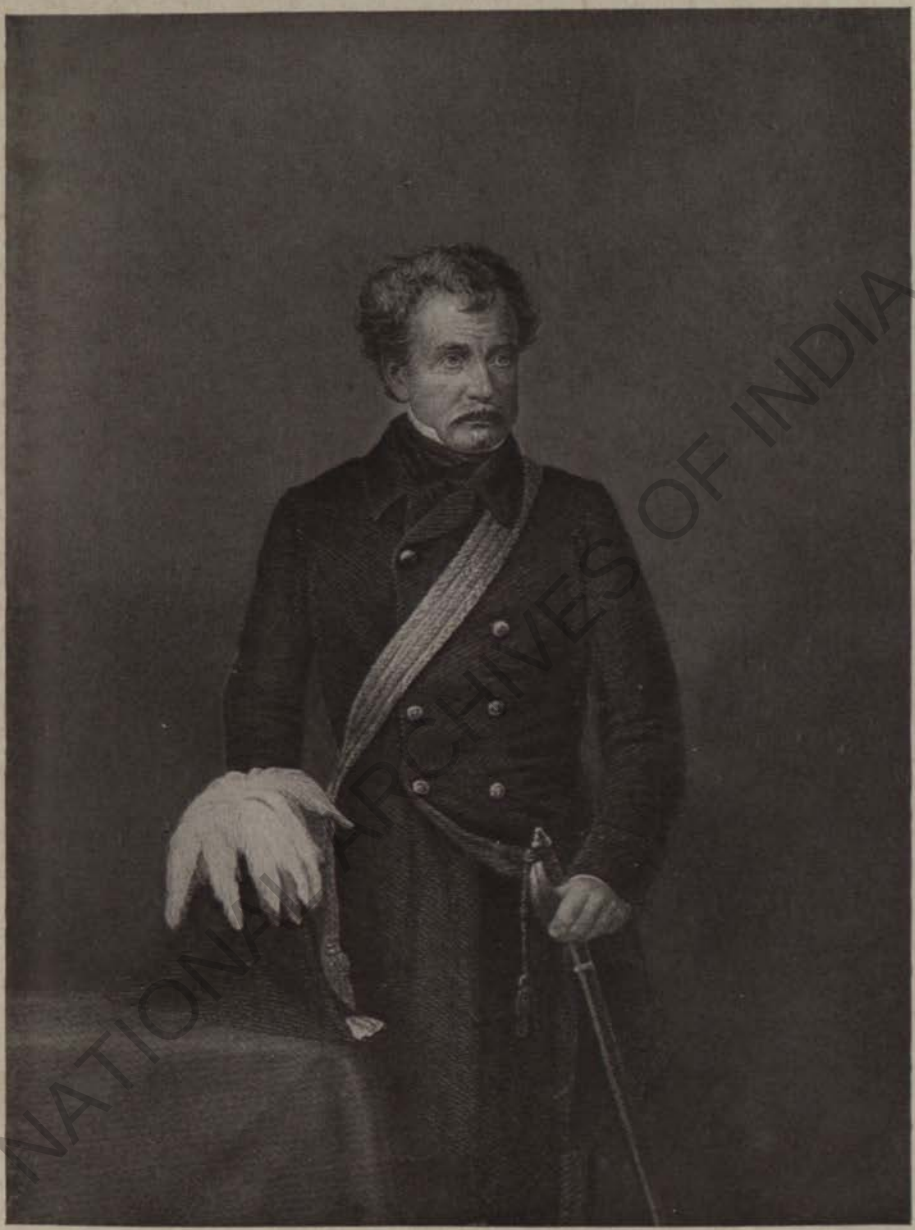

GENERAL SIR COLIN CAMPBELL, G.C.B.

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Field Force came down from the north-west, his Excellency drew up from the south-east, and as they closed General Penny crossed the river and pushed on to the capital.

The enemy, distracted by the advancing dangers, offered no combined resistance. Khan Bahadoor Khan, who reigned at Bareilly, only attempted to stop Sir Colin's advance when his guns were within reach of the city, and he was then totally defeated. General Penny was killed on his march from the river to join the Commander-in-Chief.

But the most successful of these columns was that under Brigadier-General John Jones, who proudly boasted no gun was pointed at him that he did not capture, and who inflicted so signal a punishment on the mutineers that he received in India the *sobriquet* of "the Avenger."

When the Roorkee Field Force crossed the Ganges it entered the Terai; and here the enemy committed one of those many mistakes made by the Sepoys which prove that however defective may have been our own intelligence theirs was still worse.

It was some time before the material could

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be collected for throwing a bridge across the river, and a small party was detached from Roorkee to guard the men engaged in the work. The enemy moved a force through the forest from a ford they held in strength opposite the city of Nujeebabad, probably to demolish both the party and the work. In the centre of the Terai they came in contact with the column, in full march to attack their position, and the shock was fatal to the rebels. They lost all their material and left hundreds in the thickets to be devoured by wild beasts. The prestige of the rebellion also, in these parts, was destroyed. The Natives, who would not believe a simple truth, who were ignorant of passing events to an inconceivable extent, and credited an enemy's success only when he was at their door, saw the men who had so long boasted of their prowess emerge from the forest in a panic, without arms, and many even without clothes.

No attempt was made to defend Nujeebabad. The Nawab fled from his palace, which was destroyed, and his strong fort surrendered without a blow.

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Before the troops had passed through the deserted city, the camp-followers, like a swarm of noxious insects, had darted on their prey. In a short time the town and the surrounding country were in flames, and the General beheld with dismay the first results of his operations in the destruction of the fair country he had entered. He seemed to have let loose on the unhappy land a legion of fiends; but he had the power to bind as well as to loose, and the energetic measures adopted saved the province.

English people can scarcely believe in the wickedness of actual war. Its civilised and legitimate operations are terrible enough, but without an iron hand to repress, there is no cruelty, no crime, however dreadful, that will not be enacted under its shade. The first day's operations left a crowd of wounded to an awful death; the next two or three saw a city deserted and destroyed, the villages around in a blaze, and the country covered with men as ready to murder as to steal; and bent on destruction. If the extermination of the province were aimed at, the General had but to protect the plunderer, and without the aid of

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a soldier the land throughout its length and breadth would have become a howling wilderness. Some of the dreadful men who perpetrated these enormities stole away from the ranks of the army; numbers came from among its followers, but the country itself furnished the most—and, I fear, this would be true of most countries.

Between Nujeebabad and Moradabad is a town called Nugeena, with a canal flowing in its front. The enemy fell back on it, and from the fords of the Ganges and the country around their troops assembled, and drew up between Nugeena and the canal to dispute the passage of the Field Force. The General heard with pleasure that his enemies were gathering together, and waited a few days, both to give them time and to allow his siege-train to be carried across the ford from Roorkee.

At midnight on April 21st the British troops got under arms, and about eight o'clock the advance guard passed over the bridge of the canal. The head of the column halted on the bridge, the horses were taken from the guns to

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water, and the men fell out for a few minutes. In the meantime the advance guard turned to the right and pursued its way along the bank of the canal. It was not aware that the main body had halted, as it was hidden by a belt of trees that lined the canal. A vedette far on the left flank brought in the intelligence that the enemy were in force in front, on the flank, and stretching for more than a mile opposite the road the advance guard had passed over, but they were concealed in the topees * that grew so thickly around Nugeena.

The guard was now in considerable danger, as the column had not yet crossed; but the news set the force into rapid motion, and, with such practised soldiers, a few minutes only were required to place it in line of battle. Then the enemy's guns opened, but they opened only to give points of attack to the different regiments moving swiftly on. It was now discovered that a heavy battery actually commanded the bridge, and that the rebels had lost another of the many chances offered by the fortune of war of inflict-

* Groves of trees.

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ing on us serious loss. It was said they were late in taking up their position, and the General earlier in the field than could have been expected, which may have been the case, as he had already marched some fourteen miles. It is, however, a fact, that though they often did foolishly desperate acts, they still more frequently failed to take the most favourable opportunities.

Rapidity of movement was now economy of life, and each regiment swept on to its attack with a speed that left the Artillery little time for action and dispersed the rebel force as chaff before the wind.

Short as this action was, it was sufficiently fatal to the men of Rohilcund. More than a thousand of them were killed on the field, all their guns were taken, the city was occupied, and none dared thereafter openly to dispute the march of "the Avenger."

The column quickly advanced on Moradabad, which the rebels as hastily evacuated. Nearly all the local leaders of influence were captured in that city, and the chief of them was at once shot to prevent the possibility of a rescue. The next

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day the bodies of the others swung from a long gibbet in the centre of the beautiful little cantonment they had so desolated.

As the force moved on, the enemy abandoned the forts on its left, and the fords of the river on its right; and thus relieved the Doab from the pressure the presence of the mutineers had kept up on our side, while the fugitives went flocking in thousands to Bareilly.

In vain Khan Bahadoor Khan sent out a General to check the progress of the column. The latter made a display with his cavalry, but the Brigadier-General's Irregulars, supported by a squadron of Dragoon Guards, stole round to his flank, then charged, and he was driven in at full gallop, with the loss of all his guns and, it is said, of his own life.

Already the Commander-in-Chief was nearing Bareilly, the capital, and the short space between the approaching columns was densely occupied by those whose black deeds placed them beyond the pale of forgiveness. The traitor Khan now trembled for his existence, notwithstanding the countenance and support of that determined

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miscreant, the Lucknow Moulvie, and of that infamous monster, the Nana, who is reported to have said to the cowering chief, "It is as well to be drowned with a foot of water over your head as with an inch." It was not water, however, that was to finish the career of the Khan; he was destined to be hanged, and although he managed for years to evade this fate, yet the day came when he died on a gibbet in the capital he had ruled—boasting when he saw there was no hope of mercy, of his own excesses and of the number of Kaffirs his orders had consigned to Jehanum.

The Brigadier-General strove unsuccessfully to obtain tidings of the movements of the Commander-in-Chief. Messenger after messenger was despatched with promise of large reward if one of them succeeded in bringing a reply to the little piece of paper rolled up in a quill, but no reply came. The country swarmed with the enemy's cavalry. The Brigadier-General, confident in his own force, dashed straight at the town, and on the day following that when Sir Colin defeated Khan Bahadoor Khan some seven miles from

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Bareilly, the Roorkee Field Force, pushing back all opposition, entered the city, and, fighting its way through the streets, gained the centre, and there occupied and barricaded the principal buildings.

Then the shells from the other column fell crashing through the roofs of these houses, so that the forces actually came in contact before their proximity could be ascertained. Three men of the Rifles passed over the deserted streets till they emerged at the opposite end of the town, where they beheld in long lines of tents the immense array of his Excellency's force. The junction was then complete, but the nest of great traitors was gone—the Nana, the Khan, and the Moulvie,—all had fled, and the torrent pent up between the approaching columns had poured round the flank of the Chief, and inundated his rear.*

* The experiences of the column under the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde, are fully detailed in the second volume of 'My Diary in India,' by Dr. Russell, the *Times* correspondent. Published in two volumes by George Routledge & Sons, Broadway House, Ludgate Hill, London, 1860.

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The difficulty was to deal with the numerous horsemen that formed the chief strength of the revolted province, and while Sir Colin was operating against Bareilly, they were threatening the posts along the line of his communication, had recaptured Shahjehanpore, and were shelling the garrison which had taken refuge in the gaol.

The Roorkee Field Force was broken up, and the Brigadier-General, with his staff, was appointed to one of still greater strength to march as quickly as possible to the relief of this garrison.

The atmosphere was now heated to the temperature of a burning furnace—a heat those only can understand who have experienced it. I will not dwell on a subject Mr. Russell's graphic pen has described, who then learned, in common with the newly arrived soldiers, what the withering effects of a hot-weather campaign in India really are.

The relief was effected and Shahjehanpore occupied, but the enemy assembled in great masses in front of the town, and his cavalry rode freely over the country. More than once he attacked the position, and a portion of his horse actually burst into the cantonment through the

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force drawn out, and were cut up or dispersed in the rear.

After the Chief had completed the arrangements for the occupation of Rohilcund, he passed through Shahjehanpore with a strong escort, remaining there a few days. He had scarcely arrived when the Moulvie, who commanded the opposing forces, and was more soldier than priest, attacked him. One shot nearly finished his career, passing between him and the now celebrated chief of the staff.

The greater portion of the escort was left with the Brigadier-General, who was further reinforced by a brigade of Punjaub troops, under a tried and able leader, and he received orders to drive the rebels through Mahumdee back into the Terai.

The sun rose, on the morning of May 24th, on the glittering line with which the General swept the country. No power in Asia could for a moment, on such a plain, have borne the shock of such a force; and the enemy, like a swarm of bees buzzing thickly before and around the flanks, vanished from its front.

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The sun did what the rebels could not do; it filled the hospitals and strewed the rear with dead. Mahumdee was taken, the fort destroyed, and the enemy scattered; so the General withdrew to Shahjehanpore, the Field Force was broken up, and the troops retired into quarters from the deadly sun, now acting with a force that even the most seasoned could not withstand.

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# Part IV

# THE MURREE HILLS

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## CHAPTER IX.

A MILITARY body on active service requires a much more extensive staff than the same troops in quarters. When the Field Force therefore returned it was at once broken up, and my husband was at liberty to take up the appointment to which he had been nominated.

Under other circumstances such a journey would not have been undertaken; the heat was appalling, the distance more than a thousand miles. But the temptation was irresistible. The imagination revelled amid cool breezes on the snowy heights near the fairy region of Cashmere, and I received an intimation that Colonel Muter would at once commence his return. My "marching orders" were most laconic:—"Sell off furniture and effects at once. Despatch without delay to Murree by hackery all things indispensable there; go to hotel. Have all ready to start when I arrive. Order for me hot bath,



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fresh clothing; also dinner for two; lay *dak* (post carriage) to start on journey half-hour after dinner. Do the best you can. I shall be satisfied."

On receiving this programme I went to my dear friend Mrs. Palmer, wife of Colonel Palmer, C.B., of the 60th Rifles, to consult together as the time was so short in which to do so much. "Before we go further," she said, "you must at once come to us. We live so close that we shall both have some amusement with your auction." "That will suit me admirably; now I will send for the sergeant in the Artillery, who, I am told, is a first-rate auctioneer." I did so. I took him over our bungalow, with which he seemed pleased, and so many things were nice and pretty, besides being so abnormally clean and in good order, that he prognosticated good results. "But," I remarked, "there is no time for proper announcement?" "I will 'lot' this afternoon, and begin sale to-morrow morning." Next I got packers under our Khansamah and my ayah to pack our clothing to send off by bullock-carts next day, and, fairly tired, went

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to Mrs. Palmer to rest and report. I told her the "important sale" was to begin early next morning, as the fact would be proclaimed to the station by the beating of *tum-tums*.

I was so excited by the coming event that my slumbers were disturbed, so I was quite prepared for the "amusement" my dear friend had anticipated when the call to business sounded. As we were only separated by the Mall from our compound, though the trees and shrubs interposed, so that we could not see the people; yet we could hear them, and the hum of voices and the rumble of wheels, of conveyances of every class, told of a large attendance, and proclaimed that no small stir was in progress.

At the close of the day's work my auctioneer-sergeant came over to me with his bags of rupees and said he had never witnessed such a sale. There was no "alarming sacrifice" to us, or "big bargains" for the purchasers. He said the people struggled to secure the things. The fires and destruction of every description incurred during the dark first days of the Mutiny had caused a famine in furniture and household effects. A

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little carriage and pair of ponies my dear husband had given me fetched three times the cost to him, and, altogether, the result, in up-to-date parlance, constituted a "record."

I was confident Colonel Muter would consider I had carried out his directions "to do the best I could," though I was a simple spectator and unable to exert any influence for or against.

On his way back, as well as on the march from Hurdwan, my husband passed through three ruined cantonments of no ordinary beauty. Each had its tragic story, and each presented a type of the senseless and wanton destruction that marked the career of the mutineers. Of these the most tragic and the most beautiful was that of Shahjehanpore.

The station lay behind the city, both standing on a tongue of land between two rivers, the latter occupying the spot where the waters of these streams met. A pretty church had been erected in the centre of the ground allotted to the military. It was a ruin, memorable for one of the most bloodthirsty deeds of this miserable revolt.

From Moradabad the English rode to Meerut;

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from Bareilly many got away to Nynee-tal, but from Shahjehanpore there was no escape.

It was in that church, when the victims were assembled to worship God, that the crime was perpetrated. It was on His altar the blood of His people fell. Could any look unmoved on such a spot? Is it surprising that both the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief strove in vain to restrain the thirst for vengeance, and that a word for mercy and forgiveness stamped the utterer "a white pandy"? It was with a savage delight the Artillery pitched their shells into the deserted city, and many officers with secret satisfaction saw a whole quarter of the town in flame.

I had forwarded the things reserved from the sale of our furniture by that useful institution, the Government bullock vans. Immediately on my husband's return, as all was ready, we left Meerut on a journey I shall never forget, doing our first stage to Delhi on June 8th, 1858.

The first portion of the road we traversed in gharries, but much the greater part was by *palkee dak*, that is, borne on the shoulders of coolies.

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During the night we travelled, resting at the Travellers' Bungalows when the sun had set. In every country where travelling is the most primitive, it is, at the same time, most uncomfortable, expensive, and slow. A change has come over India, and with railways and comfortable hotels a traveller now can scarcely comprehend the wretched way in which we were compelled to travel from Umballa to Murree.

Up to Umballa the road was complete, and the little pony dragged on the heavy, clumsy gharry at a considerable pace over the smooth, level road; but from this station our troubles commenced, and the farther north we got the worse and more unmanageable the bearers became. I often heard them discussing the great topic of the day, and generally they expressed doubts of our success at Delhi. Indeed, on one occasion, I had to pull back the curtains of my *palkee* and assure them the Mutiny was crushed, and that I had been present at the trial of the King in the Dewan-Kass at Delhi. For a time this produced silence, though I am afraid not conviction. Their idea was that the Empire was still in jeopardy,

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and, native-like, their demeanour was objectionable in proportion. As I feared to be left behind, I directed my *palkee* to be carried in front. Often it was with difficulty that the relays of bearers could be procured, and the sun would rise before we could reach our shelter, and light up the white road and baked plain with an intolerable glare. When it reached any height our frail coverings seemed to curl and crack, while the rays struck upon the parched earth with a dazzling reflection, which a person in the strongest health could scarcely endure.

I was grieved to see that my husband's health had suffered severely from the effects of the two hot-weather campaigns. The terrible exposure in Rohilcund had followed too quickly on that before Delhi. An intermittent fever and ague seized him with a strong hold. His head had been "covered in the day of battle," but the sun had done what the enemy had been withheld from doing. It is often so with soldiers who, supported by the excitement of a campaign, will suffer more from disease when the work ceases than during the actual operations.

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We had gone half the way when I began to doubt the wisdom of having undertaken the journey. Hitherto I had lived in a well-cooled bungalow during the hot weather, and I had no idea of the task we were undertaking when I first started. One morning, when day broke, I looked behind for my husband's *palkee* along the straight, monotonous road which I could trace away to the horizon. Surprised there was no *palkee* in sight, I despatched a messenger with a note to learn the cause and awaited his arrival in a serai. It was hours before my husband came, and then in a native cart. He told me the coolies had deserted and left his *palkee* in the road, where it would have been death to remain. He had, therefore, left it, and took the opportunity of a native cart to proceed. Desiring me to follow, he continued his way to Umritsir.

When I re-entered my *palkee* all the bearers had vanished, and though I had waited for hours, it was now that they began to eat and to smoke. When they resumed the journey, the sun was high, and they suffered so much that at every well I was left on the burning highway till they had

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quenched their thirst. It was near the meridian when I reached the dak bungalow; the paint was burnt off the palanquin, and no words could describe the heat which this morning passed the endurance of nature, for dense clouds gathering burst into torrents of rain, and the earth trembled beneath the roar of the thunder.

As I expected, I found my husband suffering from an attack of fever, and the doctor, an old friend who came to see us, advised him to proceed with all speed to the hills. When we started that night I told the bearers, as the Sahib was ill we must reach Lahore before sunrise, and for extra speed they should receive double *baksheesh*. At the first stage they were an hour over time, so I refused the extra amount, and directed them to carry on the invalid, who was asleep beyond the jabber of the altercation. The new coolies refused to proceed until the old ones had received the promised reward, and they all sat down in a circle, and passed round the hubble-bubble, whilst I in despair could see the torches of the other *palkee* in the distance as it was borne away. A Native on horseback, wearing the Government

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badge, passed, and I asked his assistance; but he replied these people had become so independent, not to say insolent, since the Mutiny that it would be useless for him to interfere, and that my only plan was to give the sum they demanded, which I was compelled to do. He also hinted it was not quite safe for us to travel without an escort as guard; especially as the Sahib was ill, and for most of the time weary and asleep. I carried also in my *palkee* all the money necessary for the journey, so on every account of safety it was imperative that we should not be separated. On this journey we crossed the Sutlej, the Ravee, the Beas, the Chenab, and the Jhelum—the five rivers which give their combined names to the Province.* Between the two last lies the plain where the Seikhs made their final stand against the British. My husband, who had been present in the battle, pointed out the ground where the power of this warlike sect had been broken under the walls of Goojerat. The difference between the fighting qualities of the Seikhs and the Bengal Sepoys was strikingly displayed in the campaigns

* Punjaub, or Five Rivers.

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of the Sutlej and Punjaub, and those of the Mutiny. The best contested actions fought in India were on those fields. There was something noble in the fair and open ground taken by the old Khalsa army. They massed their troops and came boldly into the clear plains, inviting pitched battles; and when beaten after several of the bloodiest encounters since Waterloo, they surrendered. Like Cromwell's Ironsides on the return of Charles II., they took to honest agriculture, leaving the victorious army staggered by their losses and full of admiration for the prowess of their foes.

I awoke in the night after I had crossed the field of Goojerat from a dream that I was in a goodly ship on my passage home. The ripple of water and the splash of oars sounded in my ears. I looked abroad over a wide expanse of sea, and I thought my dream was true; but I was only on the mighty stream that drains the valley of Cashmere—the great and rapid Jhelum. I was in the route of the armies that from time immemorial had thus passed to the conquest of India. It was here that Porus had vainly

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attempted to stop the march of Alexander; and during the many centuries that had since elapsed several conquerors had pursued the same path, till our own great nation had turned the tide in the opposite direction and the victorious armies now moved from the plains of Hindustan.

Some years before Sir Walter Gilbert lost many of his camp-followers while fording this stream in his quick pursuit of the Afghan and Punjaub forces, when he was accompanied by the 60th Rifles, in which my husband was then a lieutenant.

Hitherto this journey had been over a country without a hill except where the land rose beyond the Jhelum, and was broken by the most extraordinary ruts and chasms. It seemed as if the surface had been level, and heavy rains had torn it up, leaving it intersected after a series of deluges with innumerable gigantic watercourses. The old road from the town of Jhelum led for some thirty miles through one of these passes, and close to its entrance is situated one of those forts of stupendous walls which are so often seen in the Mahratta country. This was Bakralla Pass and the Fort of Rotass.

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Now I was about to enter the region of hills where my imagination had not ceased to dwell, the thought of which had sustained me during that fatiguing time, and which was to reward me for all the trials of that fearful road.

From the bungalow at Rawul-Pindee I looked up to the dark line of mountains where the station of Murree stood; and it was with indescribable pleasure I entered the *palkee* for the last time. There was a change in the dress and appearance of the bearers—even the mode of carrying the palanquin was different. I saw this at a glance, I felt it in the motion, I heard it in the grunts by which the bearers relieve the monotony of their toilsome stage.

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## CHAPTER X.

I AWOKE as my bearers placed my *palkee* under the verandah of the Trete Dak bungalow, and I felt I was in another atmosphere.

The bungalow stood on a projection in the centre of a long valley, in which I could trace the road winding among the trees in the hollows, and coming out on the bare sides of the projections, till it was lost beyond the tower at the top, with nothing but the clear sky behind it. The sides of the valley low down were cut in terraces, like flights of steps, all glittering with an inundation of water. These were rice-fields; cottages were grouped here and there in the queerest and most improbable places, standing out like large boulders from the rocky sides of the mountain. A stream ran rapidly down the dark hollow beneath, and circled round the projection where I stood. The road I had come up was cut along a precipice down to the stream,

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which it crossed by a mountain bridge, and both it and the water were lost in the black gorge far below. The mountains reared their majestic sides so near that I could not see their tops. Here they were wooded, there green with grass, and anon piled up with frowning rocks. Everything was changed around me—the vegetation, the aspect of Nature, and the climate.

Seldom have I felt happier than when borne up this hill to the picturesque station of Murree. I regarded the scene as one regards a prize which has cost hard toil to gain. Gurgling streams came sparkling down the slopes with a sound sweeter than music. Imagination carried me back to the days of my childhood, and, in fancy, I was again in an English dell with trickling water rolling over the mossy stones. I could not resist the inclination to walk where the towering mountain gave me shade or the branches of the forest broke the rays of the sun. This is regarded by the bearers as a cabman would regard a fare who insisted on getting into the street and running after the cab.



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I passed a pretty garden, and was gracefully presented with a bouquet of flowers by a little boy. This act augured well for the feeling of the hill people.

As we approached the summit the hateful sound of cannon rumbled from above, and I could see where the balls struck. The target was placed close by a cutting on the hill-side, which marked the course of the road, and we were obliged to send a coolie to stop the firing until we had passed. The higher we mounted the more eagerly I looked up for some signs of the station, yet it was long before a house was sighted. The first was built on a peak so high above me and so abrupt, that I could not believe it was inhabited. Gradually others appeared, filling me with awe at their position; but as I approached their level they fell into their proper places, and my feelings changed with my own ascent, till I looked down with contempt on the very houses I had looked up to with awe from below. How truly this illustrates the career of many; and probably I might have been inclined to regard my fellow-creatures with the same

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feelings unless watched and checked, if my ascent in life had been equally rapid.

The bearers toiled up through a thick wood, and suddenly we came on a handsome level road. We had reached the Mall and stood in the centre of the station of Murree.

The sanatorium is elevated more than seven thousand feet above the sea, and is on the high road from Cashmere to the plains of India. It was established on the annexation of the Punjaub, and has since continued to be the convalescent depot for that great province. The Mall passes between and circles round the two peaks bounding the saddle-like ridge where the station stands. The barracks are excellent and picturesquely placed near the centre. Considering the short time it had been established, the houses were good and the roads excellent.

The bleak winds from the north have left the steep precipices, or *kuds*, as they are called, facing that direction, bare of timber; but on the south side the slopes are densely wooded. The Mall winds through the noble pines of the forest, amid whose branches gambol countless monkeys.



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Small paths lead to houses hidden among the tall, straight stems of innumerable pines. Out from the damp and gloomy shade the chief road emerges on the crest, and then the spectator sees the vastness of the Himalayah.

To one thoroughly imbued with the scenery of this region all other mountains sink to insignificancy. The pines struggle up to the crest, and stand erect in defiance of the storm, their branches torn, and here and there their trunks blasted by lightning. The Mall winds round the peak, passing the best houses of the station. The bazaar lies below the barracks, and a pretty church stands in a hollow close by, through which the road leads to Cashmere.

The military command is limited to two years, and a subordinate, termed a "Station Staff," is detailed for the same period. The duty officers remain during the season, or hot weather, as well as nearly all the men (selected by the doctors from the European regiments in the province), numbering about four hundred. The command allowance of £20 a month scarcely suffices for the increased expense of every necessary; yet the

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appointment is eagerly sought, as people pay to go to the hills and consider the permission an indulgence.

The house we were fortunate to secure was rented, unfurnished, at from £100 to £120 per annum. In England it would be considered a very small, very badly-built and very inconvenient cottage. As food is dear, and more clothing necessary, higher wages are demanded by the servants; and those who do not bring their own, find it difficult to get any, and impossible to procure good ones. Everything, even water, is carried up the mountain on the backs of men, mules, or camels. Such transport is always costly, no matter what may be the price of labour, and wine, beer, and all English stores are therefore extravagantly high. Some cases of wine sent up to us from Calcutta cost little short of two shillings for the carriage of each bottle alone; though, I must add, the greater part of this enormous sum was charged by the Ganges Steam Navigation Company for that portion of the transport that ought to have been the cheapest.

We had purchased some furniture and were

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beginning to feel settled, when a dark cloud gathered over the station. Cholera had been raging in Cashmere, and the doctor reported some cases of a suspicious nature that appeared at the depot.

The dark cloud was a literal fact, as well as a figurative expression, for a column of mist fell over the hill like a pall, penetrating into every house. There it hung like death, stealing around all the contents and spreading over them a green and unhealthy mould. Shoes left for a night looked in the morning as if taken from a vault with the rot of a year on them. Scarcely a breath stirred the leaves—nothing moved except the rain that at intervals fell in torrents. The air was without electricity, without wind and loaded with moisture—we were living in a stagnant cloud.

One day, on my husband's return from the orderly room, I heard that the dire disease had grasped the depot. I was amazed as well as horrified to learn that five men out of the small force were lying in the dead-house; many more were dying, and cases were rapidly filling the

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hospital. Was it possible? Could this really be the work of a few hours?

Then commenced one of those trying periods well known in India, which we may be thankful Providence has made so short. So malignant was the epidemic at this stage that men attacked could scarcely hope to see the sun go down. Many who rose in what they considered health slept in their graves before night, and it was shocking to learn that the orderly who had carried a message to the house was buried when next inquired for.

Still the pall hung over us—still the rain came. It seemed as if a net had been thrown over the station, and that noxious and deadly gases had been let loose in the atmosphere. On one of the worst days Colonel Muter remained so late at the hospital that I became uneasy and called the ayah to help me to prepare for his return. I heaped logs on the fire, rolled the sofa before it, heated blankets, pillows and a Jaeger dressing-gown, ordered plenty of boiling water in which to bathe his feet, and with a bottle of champagne ready and a good-sized goblet, awaited

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my husband's return. When he appeared I saw how exhausted he was. He said he was not well, but had been obliged to stay as it was necessary at once to disperse the men. I made him lie down in the hot blanketing and pillows before the blazing fire, and after a good draught of the champagne he felt considerably restored, and presently fell into a peaceful, restorative sleep.

Every measure holding out a chance to stay the pestilence was adopted, and fortunately for the poor soldiers, Sir John Lawrence was at the station. This distinguished civilian, who took the liveliest interest in the sufferings of the men, was a constant visitor at the hospital, and cheered, by his presence as well as kind words and acts, the stricken and the dying soldiers.

My husband had the satisfaction of knowing that every means the Government could command, every luxury the station could supply, was lavishly bestowed. The first step was to break up the depot, and for this purpose a very large house was given over by order of Sir John Lawrence.

The epidemic was singularly partial in its

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choice of locality. As usual, it commenced in the hospital, and there was a detached barrack standing near it, in which it proved almost certain death to sleep. The men, being invalids, fell an easier prey, but I doubt whether the epidemic ever showed itself on the plains in a more virulent form than here in a region hitherto considered exempt from such visitations.

Though more than one-sixth of the men were buried before the pestilence left, yet only two of the European residents at the station died. This is often the case on the plains, where it is no uncommon thing to see a number of the soldiers fall victims to cholera, while no other English inhabitant of the cantonment is attacked.

This was the first appearance of cholera at any of the sanitary stations, but these depots had not as yet proved their salubrity. Statistics are liable to error in the results they convey; still there is much point in the fact that not one of these establishments on the peaks of the Himalayah stood at the head of the list of comparative healthiness of Indian stations.

Rawul-Pindee had recorded fewer deaths and

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a smaller sick-list from an equal number of soldiers than any of these. It may be said that invalids are quartered at the sanatoria, yet there are hill stations with entire regiments, as at Kussowlie and Dugshai, which are not found to be as healthy as Umballa or Rawul-Pindee.

After the Punjaub war my husband's battalion was quartered at Subathoo and Kussowhe, close to Simla, where the men suffered much from sickness. It may be that the seeds of disease were sown in the campaign during which they marched nearly all the way from Kurachee to Peshawur, starting at the end of one hot season and not arriving till the next was well advanced. The soldiers were pleased to find themselves again on the plains; and from what I could gather I conclude they like these hill stations as a change, but not as a quarter for a long period.

The value of these sanatoria is not to be estimated by their comparative salubrity. To the heat-exhausted resident of the cantonment below, the cool and invigorating air must be beneficial; nor is the change confined to the atmosphere. After the monotonous wards of

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a hospital with its walled enclosure, without a flower—after the interminable flat, with its endless crops and villages—the eye rests with an indescribable relief on the vast mountains and their wild and tangled vegetation.

Though it was the poor soldiers and the Natives in the bazaar who died, yet few of the people in Murree escaped without an attack of illness. The atmosphere had during this time a power of seizing on any weakness or aggravating any complaint to which a person was liable. I was pained to see how much Colonel Muter's constitution had been affected by exposure in two consecutive hot weather campaigns, and it was with considerable dread I observed his constant attendance in a spot where the plague seemed to have developed all its venom. I could not utter a word of objection to visits to the hospital and barrack-rooms, for no duty could be more clear. Still his health had been so undermined that the risk he ran was much increased, and so was my anxiety.

I had lost faith, after this sad introduction to the command, in the restorative power of the

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climate of Murree, and I felt a total change of scene was required as well as of climate. I strongly urged, therefore, a return to Europe. My husband was loth to leave the benefits of the appointment it had cost him so much to take up, and the doctors recommended him to wait and try the effects of the cold season. My husband had now attained the brevet rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, awarded for his services in Rohilcund.

The weather that followed in the autumn was charming in the extreme, and the atmosphere assumed the purity and brilliancy of an Italian sky. Then the station became the gayest, the days were enlivened by pic-nics and many evenings with pleasant little dances. One of these pic-nics was planned on a large scale for the soldiers, who were to compete for prizes in athletic exercises. The only level ground, about two miles distant, called Topah, or the "Flat," was chosen. When on my way there, I inquired why a number of men I passed were returning; I was informed that the camel on whose back the delicacies had been packed had fallen down the *kud*. This was a disastrous end for the plum-puddings and pies

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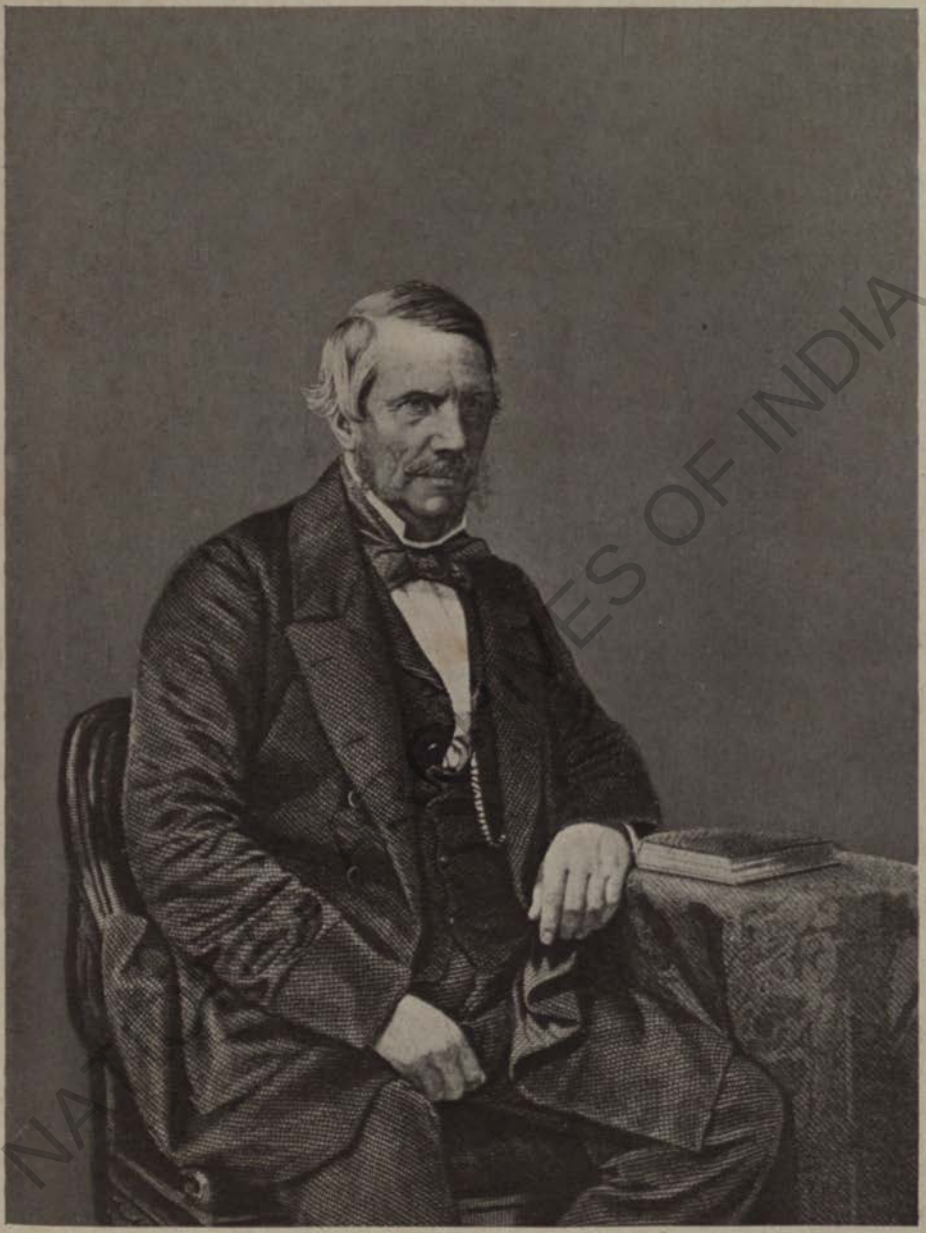

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I had been manufacturing for days; and not even the young soldiers for whom they were intended could have grieved more than myself over the loss.

Notwithstanding these little efforts at amusement, the station could not easily shake off the effects of the recent fatal visitation, and soon the people began to hurry back to their work on the plains. One by one, and family by family, they disappeared, and we were left by degrees almost alone on the desolate mountain, amid the forsaken houses.

Before leaving, Sir John Lawrence wrote to Colonel Muter to express the admiration with which he had observed his unwearying efforts to help those under his command during the trying ordeal of malignant cholera; his constant presence in the hospital and cheery manner having done much to comfort the dying, and to sustain and promote the recovery of those not hopelessly smitten.

As the season progressed the air became extremely rare and even difficult to breathe; icicles formed and snow fell. We watched the

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"Black Forest" mountain that faced us and gave the first indication of the approaching winter. A grey sprinkling first appeared, streaked more boldly in white lines on the dark colouring of the tree tops. Perceptibly it spread, until a great field of snow coldly glittered on this high elevation, ten thousand feet above the sea. Then it stole down the sides; lower peaks showed similar signs; we were scarcely conscious that our own summit was streaked in like manner with white. The vales below put on the spotless mantle, and the whole country around was clad by degrees in an icy covering. The snow thickened on the roads, the forest bent under its weight, individual trees sparkled as if encrusted with diamonds, and festoons of icicles hung from the roofs.

Now I saw hoary winter for the first time. In England we see boisterous winter—gloomy, sullen, and wet—but never this. The sun shone as brightly as before, the whole landscape glittered in a manner not to be described, and all the gems in the world, grouped into one mass, could not equal the effulgence of a single tree, when its icy

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coat was lighted into dazzling brightness by the rays of the sun. Could anyone believe this to be India ? Was it not rather Siberia or Spitzbergen ?

The houses, built for summer, not for winter, were scarcely habitable, and whole trunks of trees were insufficient to give heat to a room beyond a few feet from the fire. Here was a Christmas region for Anglo-Indians to revel in ! and on Christmas Day all who remained at Murree dined together.

That night when we regained our home, a work of no small difficulty in such weather, a bugle rang out the alarm. My heart sank at the sound, and the horrors that had followed it on May 10th passed like phantoms before my mind. As I looked in the direction of the barracks, whither my husband had hurried, a bright glare told that a portion of the building was on fire. The relief was inexpressible when I learnt it arose from a simple cause. The men had been heaping up a Christmas fire till the beams in the roof which projected into the flue caught the flame, and the shingles were soon in a blaze. The Seikhs who were quartered in an adjoining

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building, were alarmed at the thought of being suspected, and none were more active than they in extinguishing the flames.

I wonder if there is any station in India on which a shade from the great nightmare that passed over the land—the Mutiny—has not fallen. Even Murree, secluded in the hills, has its own tale. The Paharrees (hill men) had assembled in the thick forest below to attack the station, and they advanced through this cover against some houses lying on the outskirts. They were met and defeated by a few armed residents and invalid soldiers, and in this affair some men were killed and others taken and hanged.

The doctor, who had waited to see the effects of this period, now strongly recommended my husband to proceed to England, and this was confirmed by a Board, and sanctioned by the Commander-in-Chief.

I was sorry to leave without visiting Cashmere, as I had heard much of the beauty of that romantic valley. An interdict had been placed on the district, arising from the universal cause of agitation and strife. It is within nine days'

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journey by narrow, precipitous paths in a dandy, a conveyance consisting of a blanket slung on a pole.

A depot had been established at Murree for the sale of its shawls, but the prices were high, and the shop was only open during the summer.

Snakes and scorpions are numerous at Murree, and in the winter bears and hyænas often enter the station. There are pheasants and jungle-fowl in the wood, and at the foot of the hills black partridge, hares, and pea-fowl. Tigers have been fatal, and a predecessor in the command had been killed by one. There are some good *parseer* in the streams, a fish that attains a large size, and readily takes a fly.

America has extended her mission to this region, and a few of its members were studying the dialects before penetrating into Central Asia. The Dak bungalows throughout India afford proof of the usefulness of this Moravian Mission, for the traveller will find in each, a neat case of well-assorted religious works. We obtained from this source, to which I had subscribed a small sum, many excellent books of travels and history at a low price, published in Philadelphia.



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Perhaps my last act at Murree was to write a letter of apology under circumstances that illustrate the difficulty of comprehending the working of the Native mind. All the water for the house had to be carried by a *bheestie* * up a steep path from a well far down the hillside. To save him this toil we bought a bullock with the necessary skins. No sooner did the *bheestie* see it than with tears in his eyes he begged to be left to his work and not compelled to adopt a *new way*, adding that he would double the quantity if required. I explained it was solely for his benefit the purchase had been made, but he was not happy till the animal had been expelled.

* A water carrier.

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## Part V

# RETURN TO ENGLAND—WRECK BY FIRE IN THE "EASTERN MONARCH"

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## CHAPTER XI.

I LEFT Murree on December 31st, 1858, a few days before my husband was ready, as it was feared a fall of snow might shut up the road, and I remained at the house of a friend at Rawul-Pindee till he had finished his business with the depot. Our baggage had been forwarded to Jhelum, whither we followed almost immediately after.

The cantonment of Jhelum escaped ruin, as the mutineers had not held it while in open rebellion, yet it was the scene of one of the fiercest struggles of the Mutiny. A portion of the 24th, under Colonel Ellis, with some guns, were sent to disarm the Native troops. The Sepoys took to their huts, and from this cover opened a heavy fire upon the British soldiers. When driven from their shelter, they fell back on another line and the fighting continued among the houses all day with heavy loss of life. Before the Natives were

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expelled, the Colonel with scores of his men had fallen.

Not far from this spot, so near, indeed, as to be within sound of the cannon, is situated another field on the banks of the Jhelum. Only a few years had elapsed since the soldiers of this regiment lay there dead in hundreds. Seldom, indeed, even in British fights, had a battalion of our army suffered to a like extent, for half the officers engaged were killed, and nearly all the other half were wounded; while more than five hundred wearing the uniform of the 24th lay strewn on the ground of Chillianwallah. It will be long ere this field is forgotten in the annals of that regiment.

We found the Deputy-Commissioner had prepared two boats for our passage down the stream. These large flat-bottomed craft are engaged by measurement and then fitted with a mat-house, according to the purse and fancy of the traveller. The mat-house erected on that for us had a sitting-room, a bedroom and a bath-room; the other, a kitchen and a servants' room. Stock is laid in as for a voyage, and the boats float down the

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broad stream day after day, mooring, or *lagowing*, as it is termed, during the night. Heavy clouds hung over the hills, and it was raining fast when we started. At night the river rose, and before daylight the bank where we moored was inundated, and we were swept down like chips in a current. As we dashed along in the grey light of early dawn, we saw the people of a village working hard to remove their property. Masses of the bank were tumbling down and the interior of some of the houses was exposed to view. How unpleasant must be a residence in a situation so precarious!

The salt ranges to the right, though a mine of wealth to the Government, looked barren and desolate. From these mines—of course, a Government monopoly, as is all salt in the country—the supply is extracted for the inhabitants of this portion of India; and it can be traced a vast distance over the provinces, till it reaches a boundary line where that from the sea comes into competition. A few miles to the left lay the celebrated battle-ground of Chillianwallah, with the heights Shere Singh had held, rising abruptly,

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and showing signs that the river had once flowed at their feet, though now some two or three miles from its bed. The Seikhs fought with these precipices and this river in their rear, and had Lord Gough succeeded in his plan, which was only frustrated by a wise movement on the part of his adversary, nothing more would have been heard of the Khalsa army.

Beyond the height, near a village which has given its name to the field, a tall column rises from the spot where a legion of England's finest soldiers lie buried—the fatal and almost the only result of that disastrous action.

When darkness settled on the river we *lagowed* and walked on shore, then retired to rest, and started again at daylight. The boatmen do not trouble themselves much by rowing, the water rolling on between three and four miles an hour, and often rushing down a rapid at far greater speed. Thus we generally accomplished some fifty miles in the day. It occasionally blew fresh across the stream, and then we were driven against the bank, our boat being as unmanageable as that of a schoolboy. The crews, quite satisfied,

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would go on shore and gather sticks to prepare their dinners, when no goading on our part had any effect. We proceeded in this manner for days, with little to interest us save the flights of birds and the drowsy crocodiles basking in the sun.

We passed into the Chenab, and as the stream from the junction continues to be called by that name the greater river is lost in the lesser. Then we received the waters of the Ravee, and next day reached Moultan, the highest spot then connected with the sea by steam.

The arrival and departure of vessels is uncertain, and we were compelled to take our chance, though we had tried to obtain information to guide our departure from Murree. Our disappointment was great to learn that a steamer had just left, and that it would be many days before another arrived.

The cantonment, like every place of importance on the river, is several miles from its banks. The Indus has no regularly-cut channel. It courses over a wide expanse to the sea, and all Scinde may be said to be its bed. The heavy splash of

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its falling banks never ceases, as the winding river, deserting its channel, seeks a new one in the cultivated country. Then the capricious water meets with an impediment, after destroying the villages and fields for scores of square miles, and turns back over the course it had vacated when green with grain and covered with villages, and goes splash—splash—splash—till it sweeps them all from the face of creation. Nowhere in the neighbourhood will this tyrant allow a town to arise whose foundation is not guaranteed by a rocky charter, against which the river frets and fumes in vain. Sometimes its waters take a savage revenge, as at Tatta, by leaving the city, whose prosperity had been connected with its proximity, isolated in the desert. Such a river in England would require a code of laws, and furnish work for a second Lincoln's Inn, for I believe it to be beyond the power of engineering.

We had no alternative but to remain, and we tried to obtain shelter nearer than the cantonment. My husband, who had landed with this object, returned to show me a house he thought might answer. When I saw the ruin I concluded

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he must be joking, as it was simply a shell without roof or doors. Our boathouses were made to supply these deficiencies, and the place assumed something of a habitable form. At night, when the lights were extinguished, the wild animals, to whom the place really belonged, came in wonder to ascertain the cause of the strange change. Wolves scratched at the doors, jackals howled outside, and an unknown creature, supposed to be a wild-cat, bounded across the room. I rose and dressed to prepare for the arrival of visitors of greater pretensions. As we decided this place would not do, we made a move to secure a more substantial shelter in the cantonment, the more so as our gipsy home would have been a still poorer defence against the storm that threatened than against the original inhabitants.

We met with a kind reception from a stranger, who placed a vacant bungalow at our disposal; and it was well we did not delay, for a cloud of dust swept over the station, followed by rain that inundated the country.

I took much interest in a visit to the Fort, as Colonel Muter had been present at the siege

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and capture in 1848–49. The carnage during the siege had been frightful, heaps of mangled bodies about the town bore witness to the effects of British ordnance; yet more stood to be shot down or bayoneted in the streets. Moolraj was still in the citadel with some thousands of his best fighting men, and the fort guns were used as vigorously as ever. Kaye writes:—

"The strength of this terrible fortress seemed to laugh our breaching batteries to scorn. Mining operations were therefore commenced, but carried on, as they were, beneath a constant discharge from our mortars, it seemed little likely that the enemy would wait to test the skill of the Engineers. The terrible shelling to which the fortress was exposed dismayed the pent-up garrison. By January 21st, 1849, they were reduced to the last extremity. Moolraj vainly endeavoured to rally his followers. Their spirit was broken. There was nothing left for them but to make a desperate sally and cut their way through the besiegers, or to surrender at once. The noble alternative was rejected. Asking only for his own life, and the honour of his women, Moolraj ten-

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dered on that day his submission to the British General. Whish refused to guarantee the first, but promised to protect the women, and on the following morning the garrison marched out of Moultan, and Dewan Moolraj threw himself on the mercy of the British Government. The surrender set free some 62,000 men, and Whish marched to the banks of the Jhelum to swell the ranks of the grand army."

The road is pretty, but the site of the fort was a huge mound with a mosque standing on the crest and some of the bomb-proofs that furnished so poor a defence from our shells, to the followers of Moolraj. Every trace had disappeared of those towering walls, whose triple row had rendered this citadel famous as a place of strength. Runjeet Singh had lost an army before his flag floated from the spot where I stood, and for months the ground around was occupied by the formidable force brought against it by the British before they became masters of the place.

My husband could scarcely fix the direction of the approaches—although he had seen many

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a gallant soldier fall in carrying up the sap, and the circumstances of a first campaign remain strongly fixed in the memory, so completely had the fort of Moultan disappeared.

At Goojerat, where a battle followed, after our victory at the siege of Moultan, for the first time Seikh and Afghan were banded together against the British power; and, in the words of Lord Dalhousie, the action was memorable alike from the greatness of the issues involved as from the brilliant and decisive result:—

"It was an occasion which demanded the putting forth of all the means at our disposal, and so conspicuous a manifestation of the superiority of our arms as should appal each enemy, and dissolve at once their compact by fatal proofs of its futility. The completeness of the victory won equalled the highest hopes entertained.

"At Goojerat," Kaye continues, "Lord Gough fought a great battle as a great battle ought to be fought. Every arm of the fine force was brought into play. From early dawn on that bright morning the cannonade commenced. The Bengal Artillery made a noble display.

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Resolute and well handled, the Seikh army could not stand up against the steady fire. By noon the enemy were retreating in disorder; their positions carried, their guns, ammunition, camp equipage, and baggage captured, their flying masses driven before their victorious pursuers, from midday receiving severe punishment in their flight. And all this was accomplished with little loss of life on the side of the victors."

A division under Sir Walter Gilbert, in which was the 60th Royal Rifles, was ordered to follow up the success of Goojerat and to drive the Afghans from the Punjaub:—

"By a series of rapid marches, scarcely excelled by any recorded in history, the enemy were convinced of the hopelessness of further resistance. The Barnszye force fled before our advancing columns, and secured the passage of the Khybur before British influence could close it against the fugitives. By the Seikhs themselves the game had been clearly played out. The Khalsa was now quite broken; Shere Singh had nothing to do but to trust the British Government."

On March 5th, 1849, the British prisoners were

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sent safely into Sir Walter Gilbert's camp. On the 8th he appeared in person to make arrangements for surrender, and on the 14th the remnant of the Seikh army, some 16,000 men, including thirteen Sirdars of note, laid down their arms at the feet of the British General.

A Proclamation was issued announcing that the kingdom founded by Runjeet Singh had now come under British rule.

The country that had passed by right of conquest into our hands comprised fifty thousand square miles, and contained a population of about four millions, composed of Hindoos, Mahomedans, and Seikhs. It was a Seikh Government we had supplanted, and mainly a Seikh army we had conquered. But the cities of the Punjaub, as this territory is called, after its Five Rivers—were Mahomedan cities, and even before Delhi had become the Imperial City of the Moguls, Lahore had been the home of the Indian kings. The fertile Province of the Punjaub has proved of the greatest value to the British Government, and hence, too, we drew our Seikh reinforcements, who aided us so materially in our operations before Delhi.

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Moultan was the scene of one of those singular outbreaks during the Sepoy Revolt that, for their folly, could only have excited the derision of the world, had they not been attended with such fearful tragedies. Two disarmed Native regiments had remained there quietly until scarcely a vestige was left of the revolution except the vast political ruin it had wrought. The soldier had accomplished his work, all but the final chase, leaving to the monster the life of a hunted hare, and every double seemed to be his last. At this stage, late in 1858, these regiments conceived the project of raising anew the monster's head. Had they seen something of the appalling nature of the work they proposed, in the fields of bones whitening in the North-West Provinces, the desolation that had fallen on their fair cities, even they might have shrunk from the task. Had they known the hecatombs of their kind that had perished in the vain attempt—the number of princes and peasants that had died on the gallows, victims to their ignorance of England and the English—they must have drawn back, if rational men or beings capable of learning from experience.



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Failing this knowledge, it is strange that instinct should not have told them the attempt was certain to be at once fatal to themselves.

A battery of the Royal Artillery, the 1st Bombay Fusiliers, and an Irregular Cavalry regiment were quartered in the barracks. The plan was to rush into the rooms of the infantry soldiers while the men lay drowsily on their beds during the heat, to seize on their arms, and to possess themselves of the guns. They were persuaded that the cavalry were more likely to act with than against them, and they hoped, after cutting to pieces the Europeans in the station, to form a complete and powerful brigade, with which to march straight against Lahore.

An eye-witness informed us that just before the midday gun—the appointed signal—he heard some sinister rumours in the bazaar that induced him to proceed towards the European lines. When it was fired he saw the Sepoys, armed with every weapon they could appropriate—and the number, in spite of precautions, was considerable—rush with loud cries on the barracks of the Fusiliers.

A moment like this comprises years of life.

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When fortune or ruin rests on one of the horses speeding together to the winning-post, the person whose interest is involved may experience a painful excitement, but what can that be compared to this? —life and all being the stake at issue. The head of the column was entering the verandah; already the sticks and swords were raised to strike, when it was thrown back like a surging wave on a rock-bound coast, and from every window streamed a fire that scattered to all points the Native host.

That the soldiers alone should have been prepared is another instance that England owes much to their vigilance. So completely was the Punjaub taken by surprise, that it is asserted the order from the Chief Commissioner to re-arm these regiments was actually at the time in the station.

The Adjutant of the Fusiliers was met and murdered, and the bands of the Sepoys carried terror and consternation wherever they spread. People living a short way off had to fly for their lives, and all hung in suspense till the conduct of the cavalry was decided. This regiment was quickly mounted and drawn up under its officers, who decided for them if they ever did waver.



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Many Sepoys died under the sabres of the Sowars, perhaps before they recovered from their astonishment at the hand that struck the blow. The two regiments perished to a man! The country became a large grave, and the world would have looked on aghast at the spectacle had not the enormous crimes, sufferings and death involved in the revolt accustomed it to such scenes.

A few telegrams and letters copied from the Indian into the English newspapers was all the notice accorded to a Mutiny more sanguinary than that of Barrackpore, more fatal than that of Vellore, which have furnished pages for history and matter for generations to discuss.

The magnitude of events may fairly be judged by the notice accorded to each act. A battle in the later wars of Napoleon, where ten thousand soldiers fell, is treated as an affair of advance guards, and the extent of the great uprising in India may be estimated by the manner in which the inundation dwarfed heights Nature intended for mountains. So this business, in which, a few weeks before, hundreds upon hundreds of men had perished, was almost lost in the tragic acts that so thickly preceded it.

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## CHAPTER XII.

We embarked on the steamer *Havelock*, one of the East India Company's boats, where the cabins are few and small, the ladies only sleeping in them, the gentlemen always, when afloat on the coast or on the rivers of India, making a bed for themselves under the awning on deck. The run is made in daylight, and with great care, for, in a river such as I have described, a vessel may be unable to get down a channel she had a few hours before come up. Miles of sandbanks, rising just above the water, occupy the centre of its bed, and it is most difficult to tell through which channel the main body flows. When the snows of the Himalayah in the hottest months melt, the tide of the Indus sweeps over these sandbanks, and occupies the whole channel till the water is almost on a level with the bank, and the traveller in mid-channel sees nothing but a boundless sea in swift motion around him.

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With all their care, the steamers often ground, and one morning when at breakfast—hot tea, poached eggs and savoury stews distributed—the steamer struck with such violence that we were thrown down in a row on each side of the table and the tea, crockery, and eggs fell in showers over us, one gentleman only, whose chair was supported by an iron stanchion, remaining a spectator of our fall.

The Indian Navy, with a noble confidence in human nature, makes it the interest of the captains of these boats to be as long as possible on the passage, a principal portion of the pay of these gentlemen being derived from a contract for the supply of the passengers with food *per diem* instead of by the passage.

The day after our departure we reached the Punjaub, as the Five Streams are termed, from where the Sutlej joins, to their junction with the Indus at Mittancote. There is no stream of any importance that flows into the Indus from Mittancote to the sea. In fact, the country below that town is a thirsty desert, except along the banks of the river, which supplies the arid soil

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with water. The river therefore loses greatly in its course to the sea, the body of water at Mittancote being much larger than at Tatta. To me the country wore a wretched aspect. The distant hills were low, tame, and barren, the banks level and monotonous, the mud-houses mere hovels, the stretches of the bare sand interminable, or covered with a low green shrub. Sukkur, with its island fort of Bukkur, and the singular town of Rooree, with its strange rocks, forms the only spot of beauty. The river has here burst through a range of hills, and these buildings are perhaps the most secure from attack on the side towards the sea. After taking in cargo we started again. Among the passengers was a Scindian convict, who had murdered his wife, a crime prevalent in the country, and one with which the magistrates have found difficulty; as the husband, regarding the English law an unjustifiable interference with his rights, compelled the wife to hang herself.

We found a "flat" full of passengers waiting at Kotree to be towed to Kurrachee. Kotree is the terminus of the Scinde Railway, which con-

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nects the port at Kurrachee with the Indus at Kotree, but at that time unfinished.

I regretted to leave the river without tasting *pulla*, a fish said to be most delicate, captured in great numbers during the season by men, who float down the stream on red earthen jars called *chatties*, with a triangular net at the end of a pole. The fish heading up stream strike against the net, are caught and deposited in the chatty. The expertness of these fishers on their chatties, borne on the rapid and most dangerous stream, surprises the lookers-on.

When we got out to sea the salt water mixing with the fresh in the boilers checked the power of generating steam to a degree I had no idea of, and it was not till the fresh water had been expended that the vessel resumed her due speed.

I was charmed once more to see the blue ocean; those only can tell how much, who have been encompassed with the dangers that surrounded me hundreds of miles from its shore, and it was with the sea I had always associated safety and the power of my country.

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A few hours' steaming brought us from the mouth of the river to the harbour of Kurrachee.

Kurrachee lies to the left of a low line of barren and arid hills, offshoots of the great chains of Central Asia, which attain their highest grandeur in the vast Himalayah. The country around is a dreary plain of sand, broken by white hillocks drifted in long ridges. The harbour is formed by a headland, the last promontory of the mountains, called Minora Point. The elevation is a few hundred feet, falling precipitously into the sea, where the water reaches its greatest depth. From Minora a dreary waste of mud and sand is seen, with a few rocks near the entrance of the harbour, standing up like ships at sea. At the full the tide invades the desert, and the white sand sparkles in bright contrast with the blue water, but at the ebb, the reaches of mud seem endless. The harbour is safe, but there is a bar at the entrance, which excludes vessels of large size. Its left side is formed by a *bundur*, built by Sir Charles Napier, which runs from the town for a considerable distance, connecting it with an island nearly opposite Minora, and on the right

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side looking seaward is Minora and its spit. The town, whose wretched hovels are in keeping with the miserable country, stands at the head of the harbour on *débris* rising out of the mud, a mere fishing village, for fish abound in the waters.

The cantonment is three miles inland, and is rapidly assuming the dimensions of a city. The clear judgment of Sir Charles Napier foresaw the destiny of the place, and perhaps never before had the eye of a founder of a commercial emporium looked on a more uninviting site. Yet Kurrachee is destined to a great future; indeed, to a rivalry with the chief ports of trade; and if the harbour does not fill up, it requires little spirit of prophecy to foretell that a second Bombay will arise at this outlet of the Indus.*

Colonel Muter had some years before been quartered in the cantonment, and had many times passed up and down the Indus. Then no ship was seen in the port except war steamers with regiments or with the mails. Now the harbour was crowded with vessels; but all the

* I am told this forecast has been realised since the above was first written in my journal early in 1859.

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way down the banks that appeared to me so dreary showed signs to him of a rapid advance. The mountain tribes begin to learn there is more to be obtained by commerce than by war. They had already been taught that little is gained and often much is lost by their inroads into our territory, while by entering into commercial relations with us they find a ready market for articles they had before looked upon as valueless. Nowhere in the world are the exports increasing with greater speed. The linseed, grain, and flax of the Punjaub are only a portion of the vast trade destined to float down the Indus. Wool has become a staple, and, no doubt, the pastoral tribes will add to this export, skins, tallow, and all the produce of stock, and of the wealth that has its origin in grass.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

THE invalids who had left the Punjaub long before us were awaiting the arrival of a ship taken at Bombay for their conveyance home. This vessel, called the *Eastern Monarch*, was said to be the finest merchant-ship afloat, and we hoped to obtain a passage in her, there being little chance of securing one for a lady by the Overland *route*, as the cabins in those steamers had been engaged for several mails.

When the *Eastern Monarch* was signalled, my husband proceeded to her anchorage outside the harbour, as she drew too much water for the bar. He had a race out to secure a cabin, and the following day we embarked with the troops in a small steamer. The great teak East Indiaman lay at anchor without a motion, while the steamer was pitching and rolling in the swell, and she dare not go alongside; we were, therefore, transferred by boats, a most unpleasant operation,

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and not without danger, as one of the boats was sunk, and the occupants nearly drowned.

I was delighted when I stood on the poop of the noble *Eastern Monarch* calmly riding to her anchor, while the little steamer rolled heavily and the pattama she had towed out full of soldiers was pitching frightfully and grinding itself to pieces against the ship's side.

On the evening of February 22nd, 1859, the vessel dropped her topsails and stood out to sea, and I well remember the chorus that rose from many happy hearts as the dreary shores of Beloochistan faded away:—

> "Oh! stay, stay, stay"—"No, no—no; no,
> For the sails are spread, and away we go,
> And now we're bound for England, ho!"

Light winds baffled us during the first part of the voyage, and while we lay on the water like a log we saw the steamer as she crossed swiftly to Aden with some of our fellow-passengers of the *Havelock* on board. The wind freshened after crossing the Line, and we doubled the Cape in beautiful weather on April 8th. Ten days more brought us to St. Helena, a few hours after a

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passenger ship from Calcutta had secured every means of conveyance to Longwood and Napoleon's Tomb. I had then either to walk or give up the idea of visiting these celebrated spots. The road leads along the barren hillside from the deep gully where Jamestown nestles, but as it approaches the top it becomes wooded, and opens a vast prospect of the sea. Before I gained the summit I found the difficulty of the task I had undertaken on a bright day in a tropical climate, but the glorious trade-wind came blowing freshly over the hill when I arrived at the top.

The house once occupied by Napoleon stands on a grassy plateau ventilated by the perpetual breezes of the South-east Trade, and looks down on the stream of ships that flow by on their passage to Europe and North America.

The French had charge and were collecting materials for the repair of the house, then in a most dilapidated state. The situation is healthy and not wanting in beauty.

At the foot of one of the abrupt hollows of this lonely and precipitous island we entered the tomb which once contained all that remained of

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the great emperor. The vegetation at this spot —for St. Helena—is considerable, but my husband looked with surprise at the renowned willow, the venerated parent of some slips brought by French emigrants to New Zealand, where they had grown into great trees, under whose luxuriant shade he had often bathed in a mountain stream running into the lovely harbour of Akaroa.

Since this visit a change has been effected at Longwood, which has resumed the same habitable condition as when occupied by the mighty genius who there fretted out his life. No more the profane foot of the English traveller may desecrate the tomb where the great warrior lay, for the French have erected a solid arch of masonry to cover the sacred soil.

On our return we found the captain at the hotel, anxious to get to sea, as the arrival of two such fine ships had roused the innate love of the English for a fair bet, and the people of St. Helena were laying large sums on the arrival in England first of the *Agamemnon* or the *Eastern Monarch*. We had seen the *Agamemnon* get under way, and with surprising speed spread a cloud of canvas

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to the breeze; but though it was late that night when the *Eastern Monarch* started, we passed her about half-way to Ascension.

The only bad weather we experienced was off the Azores, and there would have been little to cloud the monotonous smoothness of the voyage had it not been for the frequent deaths among our poor invalid soldiers.

The Indian Government dealt most liberally with its disabled and worn-out troops, in its last act, before it turned them on the wide world. The finest ships that could be procured—the most ample space, light, and ventilation—the best medical attendance, comforts, and even luxuries, were amply supplied. What a pity the lavish expenditure should stop here, and the man on whom such care had been bestowed should be found shortly afterwards starving in the streets of London! There were many debilitated by the climate whose constitution could not be renewed, and they sank by degrees and died, some victims to their own intemperance, but others, alas! to the year too long in India. Men in the last stages of disease are often put on board to give the only

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chance of recovery, though the doctors have hardly a hope; but they humour their patients, who to a certainty when left behind, were left, as they know and feel, to die. Thus we had at sea men destined to a grave in the Southern Ocean, and seventeen were buried before we reached the Cape.

As we neared the English Channel the *Eastern Monarch*, always clean and beautiful, began to grow bright with French polish and paint. The scraping, holy-stoning and redecorating gave us a pleasant feeling of approaching home. One of the first objects we saw as we drew in to shore was the long hull of the *Agamemnon*, and although in the stretches on opposite tacks—for the wind was easterly—she was often lost sight of, yet a day never passed without our seeing her now ahead, then astern, and it was clear the race would be a close one.

At Torbay a fishing-boat came alongside, and my husband proposed to land and proceed by train to London. This course was referred to the captain, who advised us to remain till the ship reached the Isle of Wight, adding that though easterly winds had set in, he would be able with



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the tide to work rapidly up the coast when he got the pilot on board.

On June 2nd we were beating off the Isle of Wight and stood in close to the shore. How barren the sea-board of other lands look when compared with that of England! Those who see for the first time such a country from the deck of a ship must be charmed with the surprising cultivation presented by every promontory.

The land was intersected by lines cutting its surface into squares chequered like a chess-board and the colours were the green of grass, the varying hue of growing grain, and the dark brown of well-ploughed soil. The country rose and fell in graceful undulation—with clumps of trees, with white winding roads, with towns peeping from hollows and villas nestling in foliage. After other realms it was a garden, not a storm-racked coast.

The captain, having resolved to anchor at Spithead for fresh meat and vegetables, steered for Portsmouth after clearing the point, the ultimate destination for the invalids being Gravesend—very appropriately.

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The last vessel whose signals the *Eastern Monarch* was destined to answer was H.M. Screw Transport *Simoon*, that steamed past us for Gravesend. She had left Bombay with the invalids from that Presidency three weeks before we had left Kurrachee, and the captain was pleased to have outstripped this ship, with the advantage of steam, by so long a period.

Next day we were to land, and our trunks were packed and ready to hand over the side. I retired to rest earlier than usual, anticipating fatigue and excitement. As I left the deck the ship was moving gently through the water on that calm summer's evening with the distant and hazy outline of land around. About midnight I heard the cables as they ran out with that rumbling sound and tremulous motion by which we know that the heavy anchor of a large ship is "let go," telling us that our voyage was accomplished and we had safely reached England. Few, I imagine, can hear that sound without emotions of thankfulness for escape from perils past, and for blessings received, but ours was not an ordinary return. How many had perished



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during the dreadful commotion through which we had been preserved? After a few solemn and grateful thoughts I again fell asleep.

While my thoughts were roving back over dangers past how little I suspected that the greatest peril I ever encountered was then kindled beneath me! My mind turned to battles, massacres and cold-blooded murders. Did no shadow fall across it of explosion and fire and shipwreck?

Never while I live, and my senses remain, can I forget my next awakening. The whole ship seemed shattered to fragments; did I dream, or was it indeed a reality? I was hurled from my bed and I stood in the darkness of death. Is it the sea that bursts in a dense volume into the cabin? The decks seem to reel and quiver, to rise and fall. Stifled, I gasped for breath, the air was charged with sulphur, and the atmosphere such that it was death to remain. My mind became a moving panorama. The pictures are now indistinct, but how vividly my whole life passed on the shifting scenes, with one dread certainty that it was death that was now dropping the curtain on my earthly stage. The most

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distinct feeling I remember of this moment of painful existence was—that this was death. Still, the whole period of the trance was but a moment; then instinct took the place of shattered reason, and it is astonishing how rightly it guides.

I found my hand on the door; by a great effort I pushed it open, and a rush of fresh air cleared away from my brain much of the shock from which I was suffering. Immediately my husband was standing by my side, and amidst the stillness that followed I heard his voice, as he called loudly to those on deck to raise the sky-lights. The cuddy was in utter ruin, the tables shattered, the chairs broken, and the place strewn with fragments of glass. At my feet an awful chasm yawned. Far down I could see a bright glare that told the ship was on fire. The explosion had passed close to where we slept, torn up the decks, both this and that beneath, and blown away the after-companion ladder by which we gained the poop. Fragments of the brass balusters alone hung down, which my husband seizing, by a vigorous effort, he gained the poop; then stooping down he grasped my upraised hands, and in a

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few minutes I was lifted to the top. I felt as if the weight of worlds was in my limbs, and that I was powerless to struggle against the mountain crushing me down. My mind was keenly active, though my body was powerless, and I was conscious it required the greatest exertion to raise me to the deck; yet I could do nothing to assist myself, though vividly aware of the awful fiery chasm down which I would be precipitated if my husband failed in his effort.

The change was more than earthly when I stood on the deck, breathing the pure air, and looking on the tranquil shore of England, quietly resting on this balmy morning in the moon's soft light. I was there before the ship recovered from the shock; but then arose the wildest screams, and a tumult burst forth as if Bedlam had broken loose. I heard Colonel Muter give directions to a soldier who had rushed up, and I saw him grasp the arm of a man who staggered as if he would fall, and place him on a seat. This was the pilot, who had left the deck but an hour before for his first sleep for nights, when he was blown from the cuddy-table, where a bed had

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been made for him through the skylight up to the poop.

My husband then went to the poop-rail and assumed command:—"Men, fall in at once for parade; get the buckets in order; don't crowd the gangways; cut down the ropes; lower yourselves to the water; you will be picked up by the boats," etc., etc. Thus all panic was arrested, and, with the exception of seven, chiefly among the women and children, killed in the first explosion, the close upon a thousand invalid soldiers, many of whom had not left their hammocks during the voyage, got safely to land. Meanwhile my husband had groped back to our cabin, and Captain Stopford of the 52nd, one of our fellow-passengers, came to tell me of his danger, and that if I called to him I would induce him to return to deck. He came, panting from the smoke, but partially dressed, and asked if he could easily get anything of value. I said, "Yes." I had seventeen sovereigns at hand, which I had procured in exchange for rupees before leaving India. He got them, and, seizing his hand, I asked Captain Stopford to take the other, to prevent

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his return to the cabin. My husband then got a boat, in which he placed me, with directions to take me and the other two ladies with their children to the *Falcon* man-o'-war. Dr. Kidd, our surgeon, who exerted himself to such good purpose to the rescue of the invalids, threw his military cloak over my shoulders, and Sergeant Mars, who had been under Colonel Muter's command at Murree, said, "I see, ma'am, your feet are bleeding; will you put on a pair of ammunition boots and socks?" My husband remained on board, and gave valuable assistance in saving life. Being on "sick leave," he was not on any recognised duty, but was ever ready to help to the utmost in his power.

By degrees, the full reality of the perilous position came before me. The ship had in its cargo two hundred tons of saltpetre. What if another explosion should blow the ship into fragments! The dim coast was miles away, the fire rapidly gaining, and several hundred human beings on board. "Can all be saved?" I mentally exclaimed. "How dreadful the scene will be as it draws to its close." To add to the alarm

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a woman of unsound mind ran up the main gangway uttering fearful cries. I turned towards her, and saw she carried a child charred to a cinder. "It is not yours!" exclaimed a soldier near. She immediately placed the little corpse on the deck and speeded down for her own little boy.

Away, over the surface of the water, I could discern two or three small craft, and about half-a-mile off lay the black hull of a man-o'-war steamer. My eyes were fixed on this vessel. With delight I observed that the men on board were in rapid motion, and that boats were dropping into the water. Suddenly a light flashed over the sea, a flame burst from her port, followed by the loud roar of a heavy gun; then another and another, which rumbled in echoes along the slumbering shore and awoke the inhabitants of Portsmouth. For the first time this sound came with pleasure on my ear, as that of the signal guns of distress, not of the cannon of the enemy, and it spoke in tones of hope, as it broke on that coast always familiar with disaster and quick to rescue.

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At first the only boat, except those the sailors had taken, was the cockle-shell of a pilot schooner, which came alongside, and into which the ladies were directed to get. My husband had collected some of my clothes, but I felt unable to put them on, and had no power to carry them.

When I looked back the ship was in a sheet of flame, her ports as large as those of a frigate being lit up with a dazzling glare. The fire had leaped along the rows of hammocks from which the soldiers had sprung on the alarm, and a line of light shot along the water from each port, increasing as it went, till the whole blended into one, leaving all in brightness below and all in darkness above, for a heavy cloud was gathering over the ship. Three thick volumes of smoke rose straight up from her graceful hull, and I could see over the bulwarks the dark forms of men hurrying to and fro in the black shade cast by the gathering cloud. Now and then a flame shot up amid pillars of smoke rising from the hatchways, disappeared as if choked, and then would rise again higher than before.

Gradually, from the after-hatch, the flame

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became continuous; the glare fell along the upper deck and gave a red, unearthly tinge to the strange shadows retreating before it. Sometimes it leaped aloft to the thick cloud drifting slowly with the wind; then the lurid light was thrown far over sea and land. Dense smoke arose from the hatchway near the forecastle where now were grouped the whole throng of people. The little boats under the bowsprit looked like midges playing about the head of the great Indiaman. I could see figures springing wildly from the ship into the sea, where they were picked up by the boats, which seemed to fear too close a contact.

When I saw how little these boats could accomplish, I watched with an eager anxiety—the anxiety that fixes the eye and clenches the hand—for I knew the time was short. The progress of the fire was appalling. The fitful flames rising from the hatches had become roaring volcanoes, and the water around danced and glowed in a golden light. Higher and higher it sprang—caught the mainmast and ran up aloft, playing gracefully in the rigging of the beautiful ship. The plentiful supply of varnish, French

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polish and grease on the spars fed the fire, which darted up the mast, ran along the yards, and mingled with the dark cloud above. Then the mizzen caught the flame, the ropes of the ship seemed to bear innumerable little balls of fire, and the rigging was illuminated as if for a holiday.

I turned from this absorbing spectacle and strained my eyes in the direction of Portsmouth. For a moment I could see nothing but countless stars of light, and despair took possession of my mind. Then the light broke gradually on my sight, and I could scarcely control my emotions on beholding a lugger under a press of sail bearing down in the morning breeze. My gaze was fixed on this vessel, and with a beating heart I watched her progress as she came gallantly on. Borne along both by the tide and the breeze, she came swiftly and straight for the *Eastern Monarch*, and turning rapidly under her jib-boom, the order rang out, "Let go the anchor!" which was dropped under the forecastle of the blazing ship.

From every rope, from every projection, and down the sides of the tall Indiaman came tumbling to the deck of the lugger the dense throng of

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soldiers, and in an incredibly short time the forecastle was deserted and all packed in the barge.

The flame sprang quickly on the foremast and leaped up over the forecastle as if hurrying to seize a prey it feared might escape; but its prey was gone. Already the bleat of the sheep and the scream of the pig were hushed in death; from stem to stern the all-conquering fire had enveloped the ship, and nothing could live on her raging hull.

A beautiful cow and a lovely gazelle were among the animals that perished. When I began to think over the loss of this night, the sad fate of these timid things came distressingly before me, though the noisy pigs might have claimed equal pity. Every effort was made by the lugger to get clear of the furnace alongside which she was anchored, and I held my breath as the ship's mainmast swayed to one side, bowed itself forward, then took a greater bend to the side, and fell with a crash, bringing along with it the mizzen, hissing into the boiling and bubbling water.

For a few minutes the solitary mast stood erect, wrapt in flame, then swayed like its fellows,

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and like them fell hissing into the water. With the towering spars went the beauty of the scene —the noble vessel was a dismal wreck! But the fire that had consumed the deck, now sprang up from the cargo with still greater violence, and the heat was felt hundreds of yards around. Far off, in the Isle of Wight, and in Hampshire, the people were startled at the illumination over the great arsenal of the British Navy, and many rose to see if it was the light of the morning that burst with so strong a glare into their rooms.

I could scarcely credit the fact that all this was the work of one short hour. These few minutes only were required for the destruction of the finest and strongest of England's merchant ships, and the disembarkation of the seven hundred souls who but an hour before had been quietly sleeping in what now seemed a volcano raging on the sea.

The ladies removed to the *Falcon*, and I had there the joy of meeting my husband, and of hearing that all had been saved except the seven killed by the explosion, and many hurt by the unavoidable accidents inevitable on such occasions.

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An officer of rank arrived in a small steamer with orders for the *Falcon* to sink the *Eastern Monarch*. The man-o'-war, whose steam was up, ranging alongside, drove her shot between the wind and water, but the blazing ship lightened as she burnt, and the shot holes in the water-line gradually rose. They were afraid the fiery furnace they failed to sink might break from her cables and drift among the shipping.

Those who ally themselves to the career of a soldier must be prepared for quick and startling changes. After such an unexpected calamity I felt truly thankful for my happy and safe arrival. What a contrast had been effected in a few short hours! Another great peril had been added to those which had so lately encompassed us—another peril encountered and passed—another mercy vouchsafed, and one that deepened my gratitude to the Protecting Hand that had been stretched out in my defence and in that of another life I held so dear.

As I looked out to sea a huge tower of vapour shot into the heavens from the burning ship. The long-dreaded explosion had come at last;

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the dangerous cargo had ignited, and burst with a force that would have blown the decks into fragments had decks still been there. For two days the ship remained on fire; then it gradually died out, leaving nothing of the noble vessel which had been towed to the shore save a blackened shell stranded on the beach. The last I saw of the ship so long my home was in that tall, sulphurous column which had risen from the mine over which I had calmly slept for many months.

But though in reality I never again saw the ill-fated *Eastern Monarch*, this scene often came back in my dreams. I again trembled at the awful explosion, again listened to the piercing screams, again beheld the busy throng struggling for life, and again witnessed the stern discipline of the Army, the authority of the officers, even in this extremity, prevailing. One frightful nightmare settled on my sleep, though it was weeks before I knew the full extent of the shock I had sustained. The nerves, so long strained, seemed unable to bear this pressure, and were, I feared, injured for ever. In that hour years were added to my life.

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The people of Portsmouth, deeply interested in the losses of the returned Indian soldiers, came forward to their relief, and several ladies called to offer us their houses and their clothes.

But I was eager to get home, and we hurried up to London that evening, where we found difficulty in obtaining a bed. It was Epsom Race week; the hotels were full, the metropolis thronged. The waiters looked suspiciously at our attire (though we had each bought a ready-made suit at Portsmouth), and I fear their suspicion was confirmed when they saw there was not an article of baggage on the cab. There was something dreary and disheartening beyond expression in such a return to our country. It seemed as if the misfortune which entitled us to the hand of kindness caused us to be shunned where we had most expected to meet with a hearty reception. After driving to many hotels, where we were assured every room had been secured, we left it to the cabman, who took us to the Queen's Hotel in Cork Street, where we procured the accommodation required.

I retired to rest, but not for one moment could



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I sleep. Though my frame was sinking with fatigue, my thoughts were working in a way I had not before known, and I could but with difficulty refrain from calling aloud when some dreadful picture of the conflagration passed across my mind.

All that night I heard the ceaseless roll of carriages in the distance as the great stream ebbed and flowed along Piccadilly, broken now and then by a louder rattle when a cab went over the pavement of our own street.

We lost everything but life in the wreck.

I rose early, and when the shops opened bought things most essential, got our letters from the agents, and fast as the Great Western Railway could carry me, hastened to my home.

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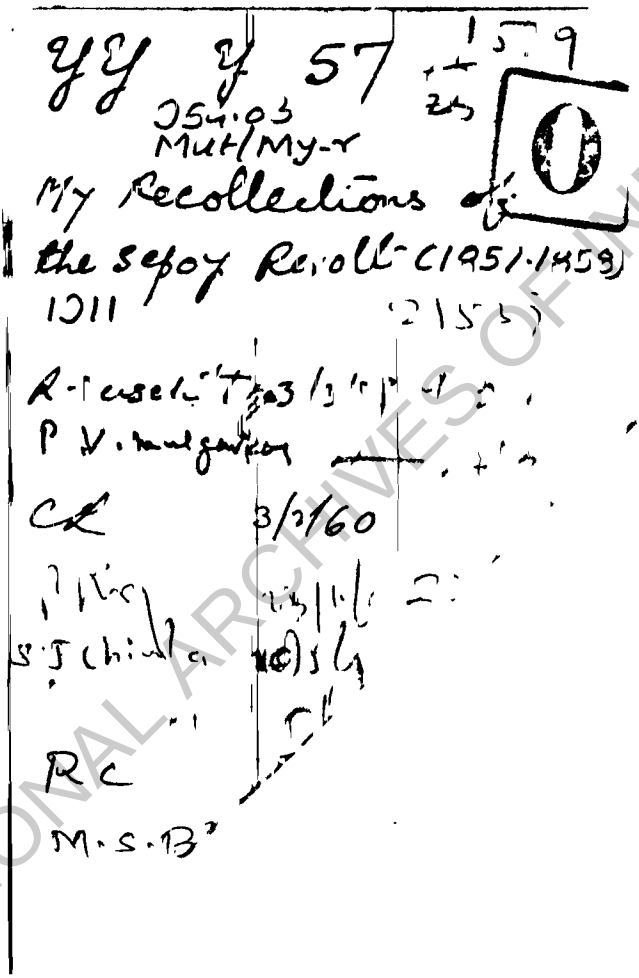

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